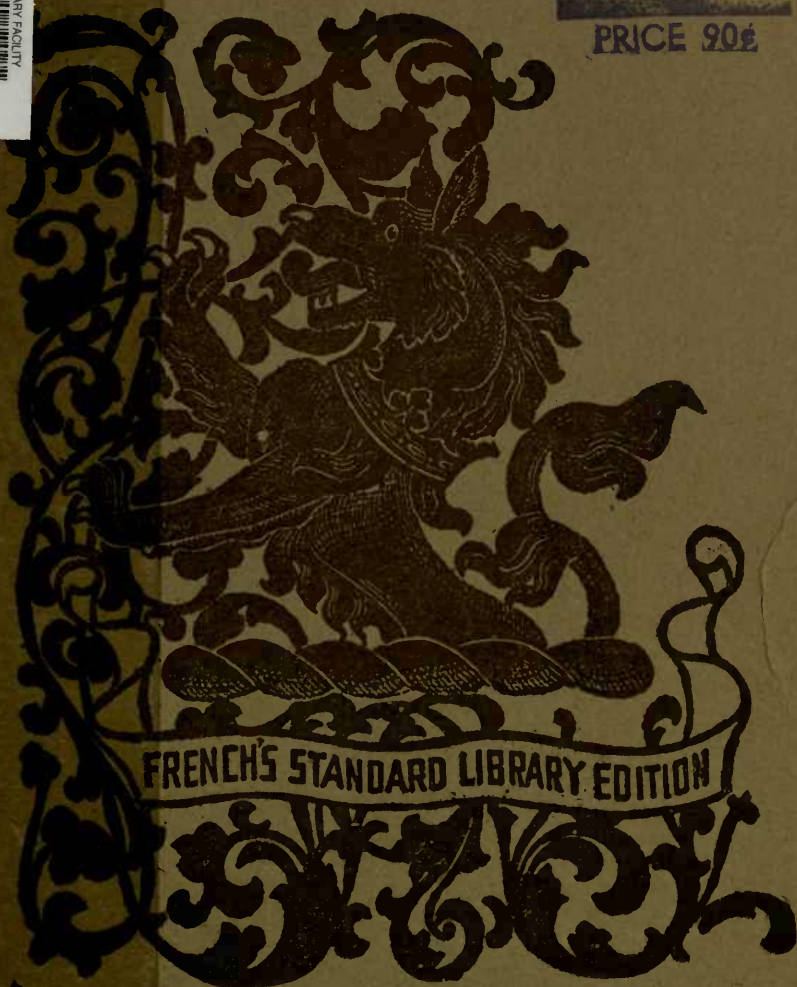


Paramount

WICK ABED

THEL WATTS MUMFORD

PRICE 90¢



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"The glad play," in 3 acts. By Catherine Chisholm Cushing. Based on the novel by Eleanor H. Porter. 5 males, 6 females. 2 interiors. Costumes, modern. Plays 2¼ hours.

The story has to do with the experiences of an orphan girl who is thrust, unwelcome, into the home of a maiden aunt. In spite of the tribulations that beset her life she manages to find something to be glad about, and brings light into sunless lives. Finally, Pollyanna straightens out the love affairs of her elders, and last, but not least, finds happiness for herself in the heart of Jimmy. "Pollyanna" is a glad play and one which is bound to give one a better appreciation of people and the world. It reflects the humor, tenderness and humanity that gave the story such wonderful popularity among young and old.

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A comedy in 3 acts. By Alice Duer Miller and Robert Milton. 6 males, 10 females (may be played by 5 males and 8 females). Any number of school girls may be used in the ensembles. Scenes, 2 interiors. Modern costumes. Plays 2½ hours.

The story of "The Charm School" is familiar to Mrs. Miller's readers. It relates the adventures of a handsome young automobile salesman, scarcely out of his 'teens, who, upon inheriting a girls' boarding-school from a maiden aunt, insists on running it himself, according to his own ideas, chief of which is, by the way, that the dominant feature in the education of the young girls of to-day should be CHARM. The situations that arise are teeming with humor—clean, wholesome humor. In the end the young man gives up the school, and promises to wait until the most precocious of his pupils reaches a marriageable age. The play has the freshness of youth, the inspiration of an extravagant but novel idea, the charm of originality, and the promise of wholesome, sanely amusing, pleasant entertainment. We strongly recommend it for high school production. It was first produced at the Bijou Theatre, New York, then toured the country. Two companies are now playing it in England. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) Price, 75 Cents.

SAMUEL FRENCH, 25 West 45th Street, New York City
New and Explicit Descriptive Catalogue Mailed Free on Request

SICK ABED

*A FARCICAL COMEDY IN
THREE ACTS*

BY
ETHEL WATTS MUMFORD

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NEW YORK
SAMUEL FRENCH
PUBLISHER
25 WEST 45TH STREET

LONDON
SAMUEL FRENCH, LTD.
26 SOUTHAMPTON STREET
STRAND

SICK ABED

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25 WEST 45TH STREET
NEW YORK

FIRST PERFORMANCE MONDAY EVENING

APRIL 22, 1918, AT

GAIETY THEATRE, NEW YORK CITY

KLAW & ERLANGER

Present

THE NEW FARCICAL COMEDY

SICK ABED

BY

ETHEL WATTS MUMFORD

Produced Under Stage Direction of Edgar
MacGregor

CAST

(In Order of Their Appearance)

OFFICER (Specially engaged)	Thomas Allyn
DR. ROBERT MACKLYN	George Parsons
MISS HEPWORTH	Julia Ralph
MISS DURANT	Mary Boland
DR. WIDNER	Dallas Welford
DR. FLEXNER	Charles E. Evans
REGINALD JAY	Edwin Nicander
MR. CHALMERS	Curtis Benton
JOHN WEEMS	John Flood
SAJI	David Burton
PATRICK	Edward O'Connor
CONSTANCE WEEMS	Mary Newcombe

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I—REGINALD JAY'S LIBRARY. (Intermission
twelve minutes).

ACT II—REGINALD JAY'S SLEEPING APARTMENT.
(A week later).

ACT III—SAME AS ACT II. (Ten minutes later).

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(In order of their appearance)

- THE IRISHMAN.....*The Janitor*
- SAJI.....*The Jap Valet*
- CONSTANCE WEEMS.....*Weems' wife*
- WEEMS
- CHALMERS
- DOCTOR FLEXNER
- DOCTOR WIDNER
- REGINALD JAY.....*A young explorer*
- MISS DURANT.....*A nurse*
- MISS HEPWORTH.....*The night nurse*
- DOCTOR ROBERT MACKLYN.....*A specialist*

SICK ABED

ACT I

SCENE: *Reginald Jay's den, door to hall up c. Large fireplace L. Door to kitchen down L. door up L. Door to bedroom R. Large low divan couch with cushions L. C. writing table and chairs R. C. Large armchair down R. Book shelves up L. and R. On shelve up R. are a large stuffed monkey, stuffed owl, collection of various skins, on small table front of bookcase is stuffed ostrich. Packing case R. of writing table. Two cases back of writing table. One case front of Ostrich. Front of couch is large wicker hamper with lid raised, facing front. Littered on the floor around hamper a pile of tissue packing paper. Chair up L. C.*

As the curtain rises, Saji is in hamper, hunting amongst paper. Constance enters up c. looks through door R. and mysteriously looks around her. Pat's voice is heard off stage singing, as he approaches. Constance immediately runs to door up L. and exits, as Pat enters up c. He is wheeling a hand-truck. Comes c. and drops truck.

PAT. Howly St. Patrick! I do be havin' the devil's own time in this house, with thim boxes and crates and things. Shure Mr. Jay's fair bruke the heart o' me.

SAJI. Stop grouch. You get plenty tip.

PAT. *(Crosses to R. and gets case and places it*

on truck) Look at that now! Throwin' that paper over the floor, as if the place wasn't littered up enough as it is. Shure, if Mr. Jay had to kill all thim things (*Indicating the stuffed animals*) why didn't he lave them where they fell? It's surprised I am he ain't sent home a stuffed nayger. Him and his explorin'.

SAJI. Talk, talk, do no work. (*Gets out of hamper. Exit L. carrying skin which hung over basket*).

PAT. (*Looks gloomily at the cases R.* Look at that now! Handle with care. Handle wid care is it? Sure it's sick an' tired I am of the signs on all these boxes—(*Picks up packing case during this speech. Carries it to the truck*) Handle wid care! (*Slams box violently onto the truck—SAJI enters quickly L. L.*)

SAJI. Wa you break now?

PAT. (*Center*) Nothin' you blank an' tan hay-then. It's tired I am wid this zoo. Shure for a year past they've been landin' boxes here from ivery steamer till me store room is full an' me furnace room is full and this room full and the hallways, an' me doin' all this work. It's no Janitor I am, it's a superintendent.

SAJI. Superintendent.

PAT. I am, an' if it wasn't for Mr. Jay tellin' me not to let a livin' soul handle these specimens but meself, shure I'd be afther dischargin' meself this blessed minute. (*Puts third case on truck during latter part of this speech. Turns and looks at SAJI, who has got into the hamper and is bending down scattering paper out recklessly*) What the devil are ye doin' in that basket anyway. Hey! you look like a jack in the box, bobbing up and down.

SAJI. I lose quarter dolla' change, from vest pocket when I pick out ostlich. An' I find 'im.

(Picks up quarter from inside hamper.)

PAT. Well, for two bits I'd throw you over the top for making me all this muss. *(Starts to gather up paper, and puts it into hamper.)*

SAJI. More better you clean. Mr. Jay he get here pretty soon now. I get wireless yesterday. He come by ship today. Me fix apartment. *(Crosses to table R. L. and arranges writing materials.)*

PAT. Aw shure now—it's goin' to begin again, afternoon teas and suppers and ladies all over the place. *(Closes hamper. Picks up truck and starts to turn and go)*

SAJI. You stop make talk. And come back take out empty basket. Mr. Jay's ladies no business for you.

PAT. Begorry here's one of thim now. *(CONSTANCE appears through door up L.)* The minute I lave the dure open. Thim bachelors, oh thim bachelors! *(Exits wheeling truck grumbling.)*

CONSTANCE. *(Crosses to chair L. of table.)*

SAJI. Oh Mrs. Weems!

CONSTANCE. Where is he? Mr. Jay! Hasn't he come?

SAJI. *(Crosses to L. of table)* No come yet!

CONSTANCE. Has anyone been here asking for him?

SAJI. Nobody come Mrs. Weems.

CONSTANCE. *(Moving to R. of table, sits chair)* Oh thank goodness! But what's keeping him? The steamer docked hours ago.

SAJI. I no know.

CONSTANCE. Saji, take this five dollars. *(Hands him bill)* Do you know any more now?

SAJI. For truth to God I no know.

CONSTANCE. Oh dear, I must see him. *(Telephone rings. Cross front of sofa. SAJI crosses to back of table, and picks up receiver.)*

SAJI. Excuse please. 'Ello. No, Mr. Jay not here. Who comin' up? Mr. Weems—?

CONSTANCE. (*Alarmed*) My husband!

SAJI. Yes—honorable husband.

CONSTANCE. (*Rises*) He mustn't catch me here. Saji, quick, where shall I go?

SAJI. (*Goes up c.* CONSTANCE *runs to door R.*) When he here you go kitchen. That Mr. Jay's bedroom, no good. Go wait kitchen.

(*Exit* CONSTANCE L. I. *Enter* WEEMS *followed by* CHALMERS. WEEMS *looks anxiously about, comes to c.* CHALMERS *to back of table.*)

WEEMS. Hello Saji, where's your Master?

SAJI. (*R. of table*) He no come yet.

CHALMERS. Has anyone been here asking for him?

SAJI. No sir, no sir.

WEEMS. (*Down L. c.*) Has a lady been here?

SAJI. (*Crosses to c.*) No, sir. No woman lady been here.

CHALMERS. (*R. of table. Moves to c.*) Saji when did you get word to expect Mr. Jay?

SAJI. (*R. of WEEMS*) Wireless yesterday.

WEEMS. (*Paces anxiously to L.*) Oh why couldn't he stay in Timbuctoo?

CHALMERS. That'll do Saji, you can go.

SAJI. Yes, Mr. Honorable Lawyer. (*Exit up c.*)

WEEMS. (*Crosses to R. of sofa*) If this scandal breaks it will ruin me.

CHALMERS. Well, why did you get into it?

WEEMS. That's my business. It's your business to get me out of it.

CHALMERS. (*R. of table*) Well it's nip and tuck if we can. Or it's going to be the most sensational divorce in years.

SICK ABED

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WEEMS. (*L. of table*) Well, if you can't put it over, you're not much of a lawyer. My, what *is* the younger generation coming to! (*Sits L. of table*)

CHALMERS. It isn't what the younger generation's coming to, it's where the older generation went. (*Standing back of table, digs WEEMS on the arm.*)

WEEMS. Bosh! I tell you this is the result of calculation on my wife's part. She wants to disgrace me.

CHALMERS. So she said.

WEEMS. She married me in order to divorce me. She held off to spring it until the alimony was good.

CHALMERS. (*Goes up and down c.*) Well, couldn't you see what was coming to you, when you married that innocent young thing?

WEEMS. Well! (*Rises*) It's got to be stopped. The rest of her case won't hold. If she gets Reggie's testimony it's all up with me, that's what. (*Crosses R. of table*)

CHALMERS. I must confess——

WEEMS. Well, you can, but I won't and Reggie shan't.

CHALMERS. (*L. of table*) Mrs. Weems' lawyers will have Reginald Jay subpoenaed as a witness the minute they learn he's arrived. And since he couldn't locate him at the steamer, the only thing to do was to catch him here, and try to get him out of the state.

WEEMS. Yes, at any cost, get him out of the state.

CHALMERS. Well, it's up to you—what in the world did you want to have anything to do with that little Spanish girl, Leticia Montjoy for? How did you **come to pick her up**.

WEEMS. (*Sits R. of table*) I didn't, she picked me up.

CHALMERS. Where?

WEEMS. Spain.

CHALMERS. And not content with making a fool of yourself you let Reginald Jay know all about it.

WEEMS. How could I help it? He turned up in Madrid, when he expressly told me he was going to Africa for big game.

CHALMERS. Well he was, and he went. You can't blame him for your escapade. (Moves to c.)

WEEMS. Well the fact remains, that if Constance can't get Reggie's testimony, her case falls flat. And I'll pay anything to stop it. (*Rises and crosses to L. C. to R. of CHALMERS.*)

CHALMERS. I can't see why you're so utterly scared. After all, one divorce more or less——

WEEMS. In the first place I don't want to lose Mrs. Weems——(*Crosses to L. of CHALMERS.*)

CHALMERS. Oh, you still love her.

WEEMS. Damn fine woman my wife. And besides I won't have this affair aired, that's all.

CHALMERS. Why *this* affair? You haven't made a clean breast of it and I'm your lawyer.

WEEMS. Well, the fact is——

CHALMERS. Well, what is it

WEEMS. Why, it'll all come out.

CHALMERS. What'll come out?

WEEMS. Why, that damn little Spanish girl I met in Madrid. I wish I'd never set eyes on her.

CHALMERS. (*R. of WEEMS*) Well, you've set eyes before and it didn't trouble you.

WEEMS. The eyes are different in Spain.

CHALMERS. What's the matter with this one?

WEEMS. The hussy. Nothing too good for her. Had to have the King's box at the Opera. The bridal suite at the hotel, and I let her have 'em too, like an ass. Cost me a cool ten thousand. Then she goes and——

CHALMERS. And what?

WEEMS. Shakes me, that's what.

CHALMERS. Oh, so that's it? She left you flat when she saw something younger.

WEEMS. Just put yourself in my place.

CHALMERS. Not on your life! (*Crosses to R. of table*) I've some self respect left.

WEEMS. (*Crosses to L. of table*) Oh indeed! Perinit me to say you've more self-respect than intelligence. Look how you bungled this thing.

CHALMERS. (*R. of table*) Now see here, Weems, if I bungled this it's because I'm doing my best with a case I wouldn't touch with a ten foot pole. But for my fool friendship for you. Now, I've got this get-away all planned and if that fails I've arranged the other thing. And the chances are that Mrs. Weems doesn't know he's coming anyway. But the thing that's worrying me is—will Jay go thru with it for you?

WEEMS. (*L. of table*) Of course he will. Am I not his guardian? Didn't I treble his inheritance for him? And I'm leaving him a portion of my estate. Wasn't his father my best friend?

CHALMERS. I know, but this is serious. (*Crosses down R.*)

WEEMS. Nonsense, I've only to ask him and he'll jump through.

JAY. (*Off stage*) Hello, hello, hello, hello!

CHALMERS. There he comes!

PAT. (*Off stage*) Welcome home, Mr. Jay!

(SAJI enters L. I. smiling and running to door up c.)

SAJI. He come—he come—(*Exit up c.*)

WEEMS. (*Crosses to R. of hamper*) Now you keep off. I'll handle this.

JAY. (*Off stage*) Well, well, Saji, old reprobate—how goes it! (*Enters up c. carrying two grips, a steamer rug over his shoulder, followed by SAJI carrying grip, and PAT, also carrying a grip. JAY*

puts grips down up c. crosses to WEEMS) Why, guardy, this is decent of you. Honest, I do appreciate it. And Mr. Chalmers too. *(Crosses to CHALMERS, shakes hands.)*

CHALMERS. Glad to see you.

JAY. This does make a real home-coming.

(SAJI picks up grips, takes them down R.)

WEEMS. So you got here at last. It's about time. *(Moves to c.)*

(PAT picks up remaining grip and carries them off up L.)

JAY. It sure is! I'm glad I'm back in little old New York. *(Crosses to R. of hamper, L. of WEEMS)* Here, tell Pat to take that hamper down to the cellar, and Saji, take my grip to my room.

SAJI. Yes, sir. Yes, sir. *(Picks up suit-case, it flies open and spills contents. Among contents is framed photograph of girl.)*

JAY. Lord, you're just as careless as ever.

SAJI. So sorry. Oh, I break glass, on pretty lady's picture. *(He picks up picture and shows it to JAY.)*

JAY. Sh—sh—Go on, get out of here, never mind pretty lady. *(Takes picture from SAJI, slips it under cushion, R. end of sofa)*

SAJI. Yes sir, yes sir. *(Gathers up grip and articles and exits L. I.)*

WEEMS. See here, Reginald, why didn't you let me know you were on your way home? I'd have met you down the Bay.

JAY. You would? Say, I'd never have thought you'd go out of your way like that, for me. Honest!

WEEMS. *(c.)* I've been half out of my mind, hanging around here waiting. I'm a nervous wreck.

JAY. (*L. of WEEMS*) You weren't a nervous wreck in Spain. Say, I haven't seen you since—since—we met in Madrid.

WEEMS. Oh, Madrid!

JAY. Glad to see you back safe and sound. The way you were hitting the high spots there, you had me sort of worried, naughty, naughty!

CHALMERS. (*R. of WEEMS*) Eh?

WEEMS. That's just what I've got to talk to you about.

JAY. Well?

WEEMS. Reginald——

JAY. Why the bassoon voice? Gout?

WEEMS. Well, the fact is—you see I want to tell you—er—er——

JAY. Yes?

WEEMS. (*To CHALMERS*) You tell him. (*Crosses up back of table and down R.*)

CHALMERS. (*Crosses to R. of JAY C.*) The fact is, Mr. Jay, in your absence there has been an unfortunate family complication.

JAY. Family complication?

WEEMS. It's Constance.

JAY. (*Crosses to L. of table*) Constance?

WEEMS. She wants to divorce me.

JAY. Not a divorce!

CHALMERS. And we need your co-operation.

JAY. Why mine?

WEEMS. (*Sits R. of table*) She had a detective follow me. Oh my—er—business trip, through Spain.

JAY. Business trip! You mean pleasure trip, Guardy, well——?

WEEMS. Well, in short, she's learned from her detective's report—that you could give her all the testimony she needs——

JAY. I?

WEEMS. Yes.

CHALMERS. You!

JAY. Oh say now—(*Rises*)

WEEMS. (*Rises, crosses to R. of JAY*) My boy, she must not have your evidence.

JAY. But if the detective got the evidence, why does she need me?

CHALMERS. She can't use his evidence. The detective suddenly died.

JAY. (*To CHALMERS*) Oh, not murder! (*To WEEMS*) I didn't think you had the nerve.

WEEMS. No—no—(*Moves to R.*) Nothing of the sort. But listen—(*Steps to R. of JAY*) I want a few weeks leeway—

JAY. What are you going to do, murder Constance?

WEEMS. No, you damn fool!

CHALMERS. There are letters.

JAY. Letters?

CHALMERS. Yes.

WEEMS. Constance has had an affair.

JAY. I won't believe it, I know Constance.

CHALMERS. We have seen copies of letters. Compromising, very!

JAY. Oh—foolishness! She's just a sentimental, little romancer, that's all.

WEEMS. And I'm negotiating for the originals, and then a countersuit. (*Crosses to down R.*)

JAY. Oh I say I wouldn't do that. Constance is as good as gold. Don't go dragging her in. It's so darned easy to queer a woman's reputation.

WEEMS. How about my reputation?

JAY. You haven't got any. Just let the case go on trial and I'll go on the stand and lie out of it for you. You can blame it all on me if you want to. Letice and I were seen together.

WEEMS. Letice!

(*CHALMERS crosses to R. of sofa, lifts cushion and looks at picture*)

JAY. Yes!

WEEMS. You're darned familiar.

JAY. Well, we became good friends.

WEEMS. Why you sneered at her.

JAY. Oh no, I didn't. (*Sits front of table*)

WEEMS. Besides, no, it won't do.

JAY. Now, let me go on the stand and testify. I'll lie you out of it.

CHALMERS. (*Steps to L. of JAY*) You wouldn't last through the first round. (*Crosses to sofa and unnoticed gets the picture from underneath the cushions*)

JAY. How do you suppose I've lived to be thirty-two if I couldn't lie like a gentleman?

WEEMS. You mustn't lie like a gentleman. You must lie like a liar. (*Sits R. of table*)

CHALMERS. (*Advancing towards c. holding picture behind back*) All right, you think you can lie in court. Very well, I'll cross-examine you.

JAY. Oh, give me a little rehearsal, eh?

CHALMERS. Just take the oath, please. (*JAY raises his left hand*) Shift hands. Whole truth, nothing but the truth, so help me God.

JAY. (*Sits L. of table raising R. hand*) So help me God.

CHALMERS. Now if they ask you where you were, where were you in October, 1916?

JAY. October, let's see. (*Looks uneasily at WEEMS*) I'll have to say I was in Spain.

CHALMERS. Why?

JAY. Because such a lot of people knew about it.

WEEMS. But—er—

JAY. I've got to say Spain because I sent back such a lot of post cards. Everybody knows.

CHALMERS. Answer. Where?

JAY. Oh—everywhere. Ronda, Madrid, Barcelona, Seville, the regular thing.

CHALMERS. Did you see Mr. Weems, the defen-

dant, in Madrid? (*Points to WEEMS*)

JAY. No I did not.

CHALMERS. You didn't?

JAY. I didn't. (*Looks around for congratulation on his lie*) How's that?

CHALMERS. Be careful. You were both registered at the Hotel Casa Grande on October the 14th.

JAY. Oh very well then. I'll make it a glimpse, a glimpse.

CHALMERS. He was alone?

JAY. Regular Robinson Crusoe.

CHALMERS. Then why did he have the bridal suite?

JAY. Do I have to answer that?

CHALMERS. Yes.

JAY. Oh—um—she—(*WEEMS excitedly interrupts and JAY corrects himself*) he—asked me to stop with him for a few days. (*Winks at WEEMS. CHALMERS looks at JAY*)

CHALMERS. You said you only glimpsed——

JAY. You're so persistent.

CHALMERS. Now, one more question. Do you know a lady named Letice Montjoy?

JAY. Never heard of her.

CHALMERS. (*Crosses to get picture from sofa*) Indeed! Then why was her picture in your grip with this written on it. "From Letice to Reggie." (*Hands picture to JAY*)

WEEMS. (*Rises*) What! What does she mean by giving you that picture? (*Steps to R. of JAY and snatches photo*)

JAY. Well, why shouldn't she give me her picture? (*Rises*)

WEEMS. Well, why should she?

JAY. If you can give me one reason why she shouldn't——

WEEMS. Look here—are you the man she shook me for.

JAY. *No!*

WEEMS. Did she follow you to Barcelona?

JAY. No, she did not. (*Crosses to L. to R. of hamper*)

WEEMS. I think it's a mighty curious thing.

JAY. Oh I knew you would, that's why I tried to hide it. (*Crosses to L. C.*)

WEEMS. (*Follows JAY*) Ha, so you tried to hide it.

JAY. Of course I did, I knew you'd think the worst.

WEEMS. And I'm always right.

CHALMERS. (*Steps between WEEMS and JAY*) Most unfortunately I'm convinced—of Mr. Jay's innocence.

WEEMS. Innocence!

CHALMERS. And this is no time to drag in the co-respondent.

JAY. (*To CHALMERS*) You did that!

CHALMERS. The fact remains, you can't testify without ruining the case

(*JAY moves to hamper*)

WEEMS. Oh hang Letice. Reginald, you've got to see me through. Listen, I suspect something. But I've got a plan. All I ask of you is three weeks. (*Steps to R. of JAY*)

JAY. (*Sits on hamper*) Three weeks? That sounds awful. Say, why can't I just beat it out of the state?

CHALMERS. (*Crossing down R.*) Don't worry, you're going.

WEEMS. Immediately, before they get to you to subpoena you as a witness. (*Crosses to L. of table*)

JAY. Gee, this is a happy home-coming.

(*Enter PROCESS SERVER.*)

PROCESS SERVER. (*Looks around and picks out WEEMS; crosses to him*) Beg pardon, you are Mr. Reginald Jay?

WEEMS. (*Haughtily; points to JAY*) Certainly not. There is Mr. Jay.

PROCESS SERVER. (*Crosses to JAY, hands him a document*) Here's a subpoena. Weems versus Weems, Sorry. Good day. (*Exits up c. Dead silence till exit of PROCESS SERVER*)

JAY. He's sorry it's a good day.

WEEMS. It's come!

CHALMERS. That settles it.

WEEMS. You must leave the state and stay out.

CHALMERS. But when he returns they'll *put* him in jail.

WEEMS. Jail! Oh Lord, he wouldn't be safe there!

JAY. (*Down R. c. to front of table*) Now, Guardy I'd like to help you but I *won't* go to Jail.

CHALMERS. (*To R. of table*) Well, then, (*Rises*) you've got to go to bed!

JAY. Go to bed! Who, me?

CHALMERS. (*L. of table*) Yes! I've gone over the whole matter. It's the only other way. We were going to try to get you out of the state—but I was sure we'd have to do the sick thing, and I arranged it. You've got to be sick abed.

JAY. Like hell! I'll do nothing of the kind. (*Crosses to R.*)

WEEMS. (*To c.*) Oh Lord.

CHALMERS. (*Back of table*) Well, it's happened. There wasn't a chance in a million—we'd get by. (*Moves to c.*)

JAY. What is all this?

WEEMS. (*Crosses to L. of JAY*) They can't make you testify if you're too ill.

JAY. But I'm *not* ill.

CHALMERS. (*Crosses to c.*) But you've got to be.

WEEMS. For God's sake, Reginald don't you understand, you've got to be taken so desperately ill, that you can't even make a deposition.

(JAY *front of armchair R.*)

JAY. (R.) Hah! I suppose I caught the jungle fever from a baby elephant.

(WEEMS *crosses to c.*)

CHALMERS. The attack must take place now, at once, immediately. (*Crosses back of table, picks up phone*) I'll phone the doctors. They're waiting. I told them to hold themselves in readiness for an immediate call and communicate with their nurses. Hello—give me Plaza 1341.

WEEMS. (*Crosses to sofa and picks up hat*) Chalmers, are you able to trust those doctors? Do they thoroughly understand?

(JAY *sits armchair down R.*)

CHALMERS. I only had time to barely outline the case, but you told me to go as far as I liked with the fees. I explained *that* thoroughly.

JAY. You would.

WEEMS. (R. *of sofa*) I told you it was worth \$10,000 to me to stop this thing. Make it twenty and split it any way you please.

CHALMERS. Hello—hello—(*Glancing at his watch*)

WEEMS. This will have to be cash, of course. (*Puts cap on and prepares to leave*)

CHALMERS. Certainly—Oh—hello, is this you,

Dr. Flexner? This is Chalmers. Will you have Dr. Widner at your office in ten minutes? Yes, the patient, the one I mentioned. (*Looks uncan- ingly at JAY*) Thank you. (*Goes up c. gets hat from chair in hallway and returns to c.*)

JAY. (*Rises*) Oh say! I'm not going to come home and go right to bed. I've got a poker party tonight.

WEEMS. Listen! It's vitally important to me—it's only a matter of gaining time.

JAY. Oh but—how about me?

WEEMS. How about me? Reginald, you owe me some return for my devotion, haven't I been a father to you?

JAY. (*Front of table R. c.*) Oh, go to it. I suppose I've got to.

WEEMS. (*Cross to L. of JAY. Puts arm about JAY*) My boy, I knew I could depend on you. Pull this off for me and it means another trip round the world for you. (*Crosses to c.*)

CHALMERS. We must go at once. We haven't a moment to lose. (*Goes up c. Both WEEMS and CHALMERS move up towards the door*)

WEEMS. (*Goes up c.*) Don't you dare leave this house.

JAY. (*Crosses quickly up c. to R. of door*) Can't I even go out?

(*They exit and stand at half closed doors up c.*)

CHALMERS. (*SAJI enters L. I.*) Go back, go back.

WEEMS. Tell the janitor you're ill and send Saji for champagne.

CHALMERS. Go back and lock *everybody* out.

JAY. Oh I say, Guardy.

CHALMERS. Go back!

(JAY up c. *They shut the door in his face.* CHALMERS and WEEMS *Exeunt.* JAY comes down to L. of chair L. of table disconsolately)

SAJI. Mr. Jay! I so glad you back. (JAY sits L. of table. SAJI crosses to c.) Excuse please you go out tonight to club, eh? You play poker?

JAY. Club! I can't go out.

SAJI. (*Pointing to JAY's face*) Oh Mr. Jay, you look velly sick in the face.

JAY. What!

SAJI. You much better go bed.

JAY. (*Rises, leads SAJI up c.*) Don't you start that too. You go out, lock the door and don't let anybody in. I'll lock myself in my room. I want to be alone. (*Bus. of locking door as CONSTANCE enters, turns, starts down c., sees CONSTANCE and returns to door alarmed*)

CONSTANCE. (*Crosses to c.*) Reggie! (*Pushing up her veil*)

JAY. (*Starts to go up to doors, then cosses down R. to back of table. CONSTANCE follows JAY up c. Then to L. of table*) Oh Constance! Shoo, shoo, you don't know what you're doing.

(CONSTANCE comes to chair L. of table.)

CONSTANCE. Indeed I do. Reggie you've simply got to help me. I know my husband's been here talking to you. It's just like him to try and influence you—appeal to your sympathies—I *knew* he would, but you're going to help me to get that divorce. (*Crosses back of table to R. of it*)

JAY. (*Backing away from CONSTANCE*) Now, see here, Constance—I can't help you. On my soul, I *know*. Hang it all! I can't turn on Weems—he's my guardian. Now, Constance, be a sport. (*R. of*

table. CONSTANCE to R. of it, kneels on chair and puts arm round JAY. He R. of her, tries to draw away)

CONSTANCE. I am, and it's my turn to have some sport. Oh, Reggie! Why did you run off to Africa just when I needed you? (*Grabs his hand*) I could have got this divorce a year ago. Think of all the wasted time. Reggie!

JAY. (*Backing away*) You don't want a divorce. Have a heart.

CONSTANCE. It's *because* I have a heart!

JAY. And you'd haul that poor old boy's little vacations right out before everybody, and spoil his whole young future.

CONSTANCE. What about mine? Reggie, how can you! (*CONSTANCE grabs JAY'S L. hand. He swings down and crosses to L. of chair and L. of table, puts chair between him and her. She holding his hand goes to chair and kneels on it*) You—you used to be considerate of me. (*Kneels on chair*) You used to be sorry for me. You said yourself, I was ill-treated. You said, oh, you know what you said! (*She hangs on to his neck, he ducks and tries to get away and each time he ducks down, she lifts him up by the neck*)

JAY. No—now, I didn't. I don't say you've had a square deal exactly——

CONSTANCE. (*Kneeling on the chair L. of table*) Well, I mean to have one now, yes, I do!

JAY. I—I tell you, Constance—I'm—I'm not strong enough. I've had Jungle fever; I've had a relapse. I—Constance—get someone else to do this job—there must be plenty of others—oh, hang it! What am I saying! Let me out of it—Lord! You *can't* make a woman understand!

CONSTANCE. It's a man who won't understand.

Reggie dear, for old time's sake—(*Puts arms round JAY's neck*)

JAY. Oh, Lord! How would I look helping you get a divorce from father's friend, my own guardian! Don't you *see*? Why, I couldn't look a soul in the eye.

CONSTANCE. (*Soulfully*) You could look *me* in the eye.

JAY. Well, I couldn't spend the rest of my life looking you in the eye now, could I?

CONSTANCE. (*Sentimentally tries to pull him close to her*) Why not?

JAY. (*Breaks away and crosses to front of hamper*) Don't be silly. I've got to be loyal. Why can't you?

CONSTANCE. (*Following to R. of basket*) Because my husband wasn't Reggie, (*Crosses to R. of basket*) Don't be a Don Quixote. We've got to think for ourselves in this world. (*Possessively*)

JAY. Well, but I *am*.

CONSTANCES Well, think about me and our beautiful romance.

JAY. Our beautiful romance?

CONSTANCE. Don't pretend you don't remember our wonderland. (*Draws JAY down on hamper*)

JAY. Oh, forget it! (*Sits L. end of basket*)

CONSTANCE. As though anything could be so beautiful. (*Settles herself on hamper R. of JAY—Sentimentally*) As the Alice in Wonderland ball when you were dressed as Tweedledum and I was Tweedledee?

JAY. (*Melting*) Oh—er—yes—Jolly good champagne they served that night—good spread, too.

CONSTANCE. (*Pulling herself closer to JAY*) Don't you remember after supper in the conservatory?

JAY. *After supper—awfully good vintage.*

CONSTANCE. Don't you remember how we exchanged rings—so delightfully medieval and romantic, wasn't it?

JAY. Gad—yes—and I never returned it, did I? Rotten careless of me.

CONSTANCE. (*Puts arm around JAY's neck*) Why should you? Don't you remember, we made a pact.

JAY. A pact? (*mystified*) A pact?

CONSTANCE. That when either needed the other—we were to send the ring—just like a fairy tale?

JAY. That was wonderful champagne that night.

CONSTANCE. (*Intensely*) Reggie — here — (*Holding out her hand on which is the ring*) is the ring.

JAY. H'm. So it is. That was the best ring I ever had.

CONSTANCE. Reggie, *you won't spoil our fairy-tale?* (*She holds his hand, JAY strokes her hand*)

hep you, but my dear girl, don't you see—I can't!

JAY. Oh Lord! Constance—I—I wish I *could* help you, but my dear girl, don't you see—I can't!

CONSTANCE. Don't you remember you *promised*.

JAY. (*Brightly, with a new inspiration*) Now, listen, Constance. I'll tell you what I *will* do. I'll see if I can get your Old Boy to frame up something else, and let us all get out of it easily.

CONSTANCE. But he won't. (*Withdraws her hand—He continues to stroke his own hand*) No, it won't do. He's perfectly capable of claiming illusion. Reggie, don't you want me to get a divorce. Don't you want your little Tweedledee to be happy (*She puts her arm around him*)

JAY. Of course, of course I want to see you happy. You ought to be happy.

CONSTANCE. Then——

JAY. Confound it, Constance. Your lawyers have subpoenaed me. (*Takes subpoena out of pocket*) Now you promise to call them off and I'll see what I can do with Weems. There's a good Dee dee.

CONSTANCE. My Dum dum. (*Removes her hat and rests her head on JAY'S shoulder*)

WEEMS. (*Voice heard off stage*) Saji, tell Mr. Jay I am here.

(*JAY rises and brushes the powder from his coat. CONSTANCE rises.*)

CONSTANCE. Oh! Familiar voice.

(*SAJI enters up c.*)

SAJI. Excuse please, Mr. Weems at door——

CONSTANCE. (*Alarmed*) My husband!

JAY. Weems!

CONSTANCE. Oh don't let him see me—(*Crosses quickly to R. C. JAY quickly follows her*)

JAY. That's my bedroom. You can't go in there.

CONSTANCE. I don't care if it is.

JAY. Well, I do. (*Catches hold of her, drags her to L.*) Go in there. (*Runs CONSTANCE off L. I Turns to SAJI*) Saji, show him in.

CONSTANCE. (*At the door*) Reggie, you promised to help me——

JAY. (*Hustling her off*) I'll make him agree to a frame-up for all our sakes. Keep this door shut. (*Pushes her off; shuts the door. Crosses up c. Directly JAY leaves the door CONSTANCE enters again*)

CONSTANCE. Oh Reggie, I want to hear. (*Goes*

to hamper, opens lid, and gets in with a giggle. In closing the lid after her, her blue ostrich feather gets caught, and protrudes under the lid. JAY and WEEMS enter talking)

JAY. (*Taking WEEMS L. arm, coming down c*) Now see here, Guardy, I've been thinking. I want to talk this over with you. Suppose you frame up something or other and let Constance——

WEEMS. (*R. of JAY*) Impossible, impossible!

JAY. It's being done. Now see here, Weems, I tell you—listen, I've a plan.

WEEMS. All I need is a little time, and—(*Suddenly notices the blue ostrich feather sticking out of hamper*) Good heavens! What have you got in that basket? (*Points to it. JAY turns and sees the feathers*)

JAY. What! Oh—Oh—(*Collecting himself*) Oh, that! T—th—that's an ostrich——

WEEMS. An ostrich?

JAY. Yes, a live, blue ostrich.

WEEMS. A blue ostrich! (*Starts to cross to the basket. JAY intercepts him*)

JAY. Oh—keep away from that! She's wild, and he's blue.

WEEMS. Whoever heard of a blue ostrich.

JAY. Oh it's very rare. Very ostrichazura.

WEEMS. Dear me, how interesting. Ostriches-azura. (*Crosses to L. of JAY and again tries to lift the lid. JAY grabs his arm and swings him to c.*)

JAY. (*R. of WEEMS*) Now see here, Weems, I beg, I implore you to let Constance obtain the divorce on some non-committal ground. Say cruelty, or habitual drunkenness.

WEEMS. Reginald, understand me—once and for all, I will not free Constance, to make me ridiculous, by marrying the whippersnapper.

JAY. Whippersnapper?

WEEMS. I simply will not. Opprobrium, while I don't court it, I can combat, but not ridicule.

JAY. What do you mean Whippersnapper?

WEEMS. I mean that Constance is infatuated.

JAY. I don't believe it. I know Constance. No sir, nothing like that.

WEEMS. I tell you it's so. (*He moves up L. C. Lid of basket raises and closes as WEEMS turns down stage. JAY staggers as he sees lid open*) She as good as admitted it——

JAY. What did she say?

WEEMS. She called me an old nut. (*Crosses down L. C.*)

JAY. Oh that's mere married persiflage.

WEEMS. She taunted me.

JAY. How?

WEEMS. She said she didn't intend to be an old man's slave all her life, when she could be a young man's darling. (*Moves to L. of JAY. Confidentially*) She informed me, she knew a young man who would play Tweedledum to her Tweedledee. Ha, ha! Her Tweedledum indeed. (*Crosses to R. C. JAY registers amazement. Lid of basket slowly rises. JAY terrified, leans against table*) What do you think of that? (*WEEMS goes down R. JAY crosses to WEEMS as PAT enters, with truck*)

JAY. Sh, the Janitor!

PAT. That black and tan haythen told me to come for the basket. And by the same token if it wasn't for yerself Mr. Jay, I'd not be takin' orders from the loikes o' him. (*Puts truck down alongside the hamper. JAY crosses to help him with the basket. PAT tries to lift it*) Say, that Japanese told me this was empty.

JAY. (*Holding his hand on the lid as he helps to lift*) Now be very careful with this.

(*Hamper moves. PAT jumps away alarmed.*)

PAT. Oh, it moves. What's in it?

JAY. An ostrich. Handle with care and don't put that over the bumps.

PAT. Wid care is it? D'ye know where this is going, with me store room full, and me furnace room full it do be goin' to the sub cellar, that's where it's going. (*Exit PAT wheeling off the hamper. JAY follows him up c. ad lib till off*)

JAY. (*Up c. Sways against door frame*) Oh! if that basket had stayed a minute longer I believe I'd have fainted. (*Comes down, sits on sofa*)

WEEMS. Why?

JAY. Why? Why? Oh, why!

WEEMS. Why, you're acting as if you were ill!—

JAY. Well, didn't you ask me to be ill?

(*Enter CHALMERS with FLEXNER and WIDNER up c. CHALMERS enters first and goes to up end of table. FLEXNER follows and crosses down to L. of WEEMS at front of table. WIDNER follows down c. FLEXNER moves a step to R. c. as WIDNER shakes hands with WEEMS*)

CHALMERS. Mr. Weems, the doctors, allow me, Dr. Flexner. (*Back of table*)

FLEXNER. (*To c.*) Ah Mr. Weems delighted, I remember you very well.

DR. WIDNER. Delighted. (*Shakes hands*)

WEEMS. (*As he shakes hands with WIDNER*) Gentlemen you must find this an odd consultation.

WIDNER. (*c.*) Where, may I ask, is the patient?

CHALMERS. (*Who has moved to L. c. indicating JAY*) This is the patient.

(WIDNER and FLEXNER look at JAY and then at each other.)

JAY. I'm pleased to meet you, but I'm hopeful we can adjust this without your services. If Mr. Weems will only——

CHALMERS. (*At the R. end of sofa*) You will have to be guided by me.

FLEXNER. A very excellent adviser. (*Crossing to L. C. to R. of sofa*) I have had the pleasure of knowing Mr. Chalmers for years. Mr. Chalmers, I have every confidence——

WEEMS. Be seated, gentlemen.

(CHALMERS gets chair from up C. and places it C. Sits R. of table. WIDNER sits L. of table. FLEXNER sits L. of WEEMS.)

CHALMERS. (*Crosses to back of table*) Let's get down to business. The fact is—as I have told you, Mrs. Weems wants a divorce.

WIDNER. I am thoroughly opposed to divorce for ethical reasons.

FLEXNER. No family physician could feel otherwise.

CHALMERS. To assist in preventing a divorce is a worthy act.

WEEMS. And I have just come from the Bank. (*JAY rises, and paces nervously up and down*)

JAY. Where the fees come from.

FLEXNER. (*Looks at JAY then at WIDNER, then back to JAY*) Upon my soul, Mr. Jay, you do look badly.

JAY. Do I?

CHALMERS. Mr. Weems I think we had best be going.

WEEMS. Why?

CHALMERS. It wouldn't do to have it known that we were here, when the *attack* took place.

JAY. The attack! (*Sits sofa*)

WEEMS. Yes, yes, I see. (*Rises and crosses to R. of chair, R. of table*)

FLEXNER. (*Rising*) I don't wish to appear mercenary, but just a word with regard to fees.

(*WEEMS goes up R. He hands money to FLEXNER, then comes down and hands money to WIDNER. WIDNER moves to R. of table.*)

CHALMERS. (*Comes to R. of sofa. FLEXNER replaces chair up C.*) I hope you fully understand the gravity of the situation.

JAY. Do I?

CHALMERS. Well, don't forget it.

WEEMS. (*Crosses to JAY*) Good bye, my boy. If the worst comes to the worst. (*Shakes his hand*) God bless you.

(*JAY turns and watches WEEMS off. CHALMERS goes up C., exits with WEEMS. DR. WIDNER down R., FLEXNER up C. JAY sitting sofa*)

WIDNER. (R.) How's the patient, eh?

FLEXNER. Now we had best proceed with the diagnosis. (*WIDNER walks down C. then up to R. of sofa, keeping his eyes on JAY. FLEXNER walks down L. JAY looks from one to the other with suspicion*)

WIDNER. (R. of sofa) We will prepare a list of your symptoms which you must memorize. We have decided on nervous prostration.

JAY. Why nervous prostration?

FLEXNER. (L. of sofa) Because it's absolutely

impossible to prove you haven't got it. See the point?

WIDNER. If you say you have fainting spells. Dizziness—a desire to scream, bursts of laughter, who's to prove you haven't?

FLEXNER. Besides—I have a clinical thermometer that always registers 104. (*Taking out thermometer*)

JAY. Why 104?

FLEXNER. 104 is hope without certainty.

WIDNER. But you must remember to be sick.

JAY. Do you know of some prominent undertaker?

FLEXNER. Leave all that to us.

JAY. (*Rises and crosses to L. of table R. C.*) I will. All right, I'll be ill. I'll have mumps, chickenpox, measles, shingles. But *not* nervous prostration! (*Crosses to front of table L. FLEXNER to C.*)

WIDNER. (*Moves a step to L. of JAY*) You have *got* to have sinking spells.

JAY. (*Sits L. of table*) I've just had one.

FLEXNER. Sudden pains, restlessness—Of course you can't go out.

JAY. But lots of prostrates go out.

WIDNER. But you can't or you could go to Court. Why, you're too ill even to make a deposition.

JAY. Am I?

WIDNER. You will be. (*Looks meaningfully at FLEXNER*) Even in this apartment, you have to go in an invalid chair. I've left orders at my sanitarium to have one sent over.

FLEXNER. How about your nurse?

JAY. But I don't want a nurse. Can't I be dying without a nurse?

WIDNER. They always go with dying.

JAY. (*Crosses to R. of table*) Then I don't

want a nurse. I won't have it! Let Saji take care of me.

FLEXNER. But my dear sir—it won't do—It would have no verisimilitude. (*Crosses to behind chair L. of table.* WIDNER *crosses up round table to down R. of table*)

JAY. I don't want any veri-similitude; and I won't have a nurse. They're all tyrants.

WIDNER. Not at all, Mr. Jay, not at all.

JAY. They are too. Lemon-faced, sour old maids, all of them.

FLEXNER. I assure you——

WIDNER. The day nurse may be here at any moment. (*Moves to R. of JAY*)

JAY. Oh Lord!

FLEXNER. (*To L. of JAY, who sits R. of table*) Come on now, take your collar and shoes off and get ready for the nurse. (*WIDNER and FLEXNER start taking off his shoes—WIDNER R. and FLEXNER L. of JAY*)

JAY. But hang it, get me an orderly, I don't want a nurse. (*They remove his shoes and collar and hustle him off R. WIDNER stands at the door as JAY and FLEXNER move to door*) I tell you I can stand anything but that—I loathe nurses. They all smell of ether.

FLEXNER. No, they don't.

JAY. Yes, they do too. I've smelt 'em. I'm not sick, oh, I'm dying!

(*Door closes. As WIDNER stands at the door MISS DURANT enters up C. and comes down C. looking about her.*)

MISS DURANT. Oh, Dr. Widner, you left word for me to come right up and the door was blocked.

open and nobody about, so I came on in. I hope it was all right.

WIDNER. (*Crosses to front of table R. of MISS DURANT*) Oh quite, nurse. Quite. I want to explain a little about this case. It's prostration. He doesn't realize his condition. Or rather only at intervals. He thinks he's perfectly well—and then he thinks he's dying. He—er—has hallucinations—imagines he's involved in some sort of conspiracy—don't be surprised at anything he may say or do.

JAY'S VOICE. (*Heard off*) Take your hands out of my pocket.

WIDNER. Fancies he's being robbed. (*Looks thoughtfully towards the door R.*) I wonder! You must be gentle with him but very firm. Absolute necessity for him is quiet. Under no circumstances must he see anyone, except his guardian, Mr. Weems and Mr. Chalmers, his lawyer. Otherwise positively no one, you understand?

MISS DURANT. Yes, doctor, I understand. (*Moves to front of sofa. Loud commotion comes from bedroom R. as JAY enters wrapped in dressing gown. He walks backwards, talking to FLEXNER, who follows him*)

JAY. (*Crosses to C. to L. of WIDNER. FLEXNER R. of WIDNER*) Be reasonable, can't you? Remember I'm as well as anybody. I'll agree to stay put, but I'm hanged if I'll stand for all this other bunk. And I positively will not have a nurse. (*He turns and catches sight of MISS DURANT*) Who is this lady?

FLEXNER. Your nurse, Miss Durant.

JAY. I'm sick. I'm dying. I want a nurse.

MISS DURANT. (*Humoring him*) Yes, yes.

JAY. (*Crosses to MISS DURANT with outstretched arms. She leads him and seats him on R. end of sofa*) Oh, I'm so glad you've come. Oh good,

kind, lovely nurse, oh, don't move, you're not going to leave me?

MISS DURANT. (*Standing R. of JAY*) Why no, certainly not. I never disappoint my doctors.

JAY. (*R. end of sofa, holding on to Nurse*) You'll surely stay? It's one of my symptoms. I take violent likes and dislikes. What did you say your name was?

MISS DURANT. Miss Durant.

JAY. Miss Durant. Have you a first name?

MISS DURANT. Georgina.

JAY. Georgina—beautiful name!

MISS DURANT. *I'm glad you like it.*

FLEXNER. (*To CHALMERS*) This begins to look like a case!

WIDNER. Yes. Now, Miss Durant——

(MISS DURANT *turns to c.*)

JAY. Oh—oh—ouch! My head—oh, it's coming off—oh, oh—hold it on for me—hold it on. (MISS DURANT *at arm of sofa*. FLEXNER *goes up c. to ring bell*. WIDNER *then moves over to L. of CHALMERS*. *She takes his head in her hands, and he subsides purring*)

MISS DURANT. (WIDNER *going away a step up c.* MISS DURANT *putting hands on JAY's forehead, moving back of him*) There—does that help?

JAY. (*Smiling*) Does it help? It feels like victory on a capital dome.

FLEXNER. (*Crosses to R. of MISS DURANT*) I'm afraid you'll have to humor him, Miss Durant! (*Goes up c. to ring bell*)

JAY. Oh—oh—don't take your hand off—it's loosening again, oh! (*Taking down one hand and looking at it*. FLEXNER *moves a step L. of WID-*

NER) Why, what a beautiful hand. Did you bring your trunk?

MISS DURANT. Oh no, just my grip!

SAJI. (*Enters L. I. Crosses to L. of JAY*) Excuse please. Somebody ling?

JAY. Oh, that you, Saji? This is Miss Durant, my nurse.

(SAJI *looks disgusted at* MISS DURANT.)

SAJI. (*Amazed*) Much better get honorable man nurse.

JAY. (SAJI *looks*) That will be about all from you, Saji. Take Miss Durant's grip to her room. Miss Durant will have the red room and the little sun-parlor.

SAJI. Yes, sir. (*Picks up grip and starts to go, then turns*) Oh, excuse please—Man jus' bling baby carriage. Who for?

JAY. (*Looks slowly at* WIDNER. MISS DURANT *still holding his forehead*) Am I going to have a baby? (*All register*)

WIDNER. MISS DURANT *moves L. and back of* JAY) It's the invalid chair——

FLEXNER. Send it in. (*Moving up c. back of table to R. Sits R. of table*)

WIDNER. (*Crosses to R. of* MISS DURANT) Now, Mr. Jay, you must remember you are to be quiet. (*To* MISS DURANT) Nurse, he is not to receive visitors under any pretext whatever. Nurse, give him your *best* attention. (*Sits L. of table and writes*)

MISS DURANT. I understand.

JAY. I feel I'm going to be sick for a long time

(WIDNER *to up R. of* JAY.)

MISS DURANT. Oh no you're not.

JAY. Oh, yes I am. I feel it coming on.

(Enter PAT with wheel chair to c.)

PAT. *(Looks at JAY and MISS DURANT)* For the love o' heaven, what next?

(JAY looks at it, disgustedly, then leaps up clutching at MISS DURANT.)

JAY. Oh there's my little chair.

(WIDNER L. of table and writes, sitting, and FLEXNER to R. of table sits and writes.)

MISS DURANT. It's very comfortable.

JAY. I want to get into my chair! *(Gets in and wheels L.)* Who wants a Buick? *(At once starts wheeling it down to L. Nurse to L. C.)*

PAT. He's not an explorer, he's a nut. *(Exits muttering "He's a nut")*

WIDNER. *(To R. of Nurse, who is L. C.)* Now, Miss Durant, here is the regime he is to follow. *(Sits L. of table and writes—JAY turns his chair and faces to c.)*

FLEXNER. *(Crosses up back of table down to L. of nurse, hands her prescription)* Have this made up.

WIDNER. Rest, quiet, isolation, no excitement, no noise, no interviews!

MISS DURANT. *(Crosses to front of sofa to R. of JAY)* I understand, a low diet. *(Crosses back of sofa, puts prescription on mantel, then to L. of sofa and puts pillow at JAY's back in chair)*

JAY. *(Loudly)* No!

(Warn bell.)

FLEXNER. (*L. of table. Holding up restraining hand to JAY*) Unless his temperature rises, he may eat freely. (*Crosses to front of sofa R. of nurse*)

JAY. And drink—and drink?

WIDNER. It would be unwise to break suddenly into a well established habit. (*JAY looks at window*) A highball champagne, when weak.

FLEXNER. (*To WIDNER*) He may sit up for his evening meal, don't you think?

WIDNER. I'm opposed to nourishment taken when reclining. (*JAY sits up straight*) Now, Miss Durant, gentle but firm. (*Crosses to c. to R. of MISS DURANT*)

FLEXNER. (*FLEXNER and WIDNER go up c.*) Good day, Mr. Jay, good day, Miss Durant. We may, I think, safely leave him to the progress of his malady.

WIDNER. Yes, yes, let nature take its course.

FLEXNER. We hope for the best.

WIDNER. But prepare for the worst. (*Exeunt WIDNER and FLEXNER up c.*)

(*MISS DURANT moves to L. of JAY. Starts to wheel him to R.*)

JAY. Solitude for two.

MISS DURANT. And now I must wheel you to your room.

JAY. No—don't let's, yet. (*Turns chair. Nurse wheels him a step towards c.*)

MISS DURANT. But you must. (*Wheeling him*)

JAY. (*Turning chair front*) The doctors said you must be gentle with me. (*A ring outside—Bell*)

MISS DURANT. But very firm. (*Bell.*) Listen—more people. Come now, you've got to begin your isolation.

JAY. (*Turns chair—face front, grinning at her*) Not icy isolation. (*He turns the wheel chair to face her. She takes the handles and turns him round again*)

MISS DURANT. Now, no. Don't let's make a bad beginning. (*Turns chair to face c.*)

JAY. But that makes a good ending.

MISS DURANT. That remains to be seen.

JAY. What?

MISS DURANT. That remains——

JAY. Don't call me "remains," I don't like it.

MISS DURANT. (*Wheeling him toward door*) Very well then. One, two, three—(*Bell*) Somebody's coming. (*At c. he turns the wheels again and faces her. All through this scene they struggle with the wheel chair, he with wheels, she with handle bars*)

JAY. (*Facing front, R.*) Say, do you know I don't think I could have gone through with it, if it hadn't been for you.

MISS DURANT. (*To L. of him*) You're not through with it yet. You haven't begun.

JAY. (*Beatifically*) We haven't begun. We've got this whole long, beautiful illness to go through together, haven't we?

MISS DURANT. That's one way to put it. Now come along and wash up for dinner.

JAY. (*Turns chair*) Do you dine with me?

MISS DURANT. I sit with you.

JAY. Say, Nursey, do you believe in love at first sight? (*Holding chair as she tries to turn it—He wheels about again*)

MISS DURANT. Aren't you naughty! (*Bell*) There's the door. (*Ring. Goes up c.*) And there's the hall bell. (*JAY turns chair and follows her up c.*)

JAY. (*Up c.*) Nursey, nursey, what is love?

Tell me. (*Nurse come c. takes chair and wheels JAY off R. talking. She manoeuvres in front of the door*)

MISS DURANT. Love? Love is emotional hyperstrabismus—of the mental optics otherwise known as hallucination. (*She whirls him expertly to the door*)

JAY. Sounds like a disease. (*They exit through the door as CONSTANCE staggers into the room, followed by SAJI protesting. Her hat is a wreck, her clothes awry.*)

CONSTANCE. I'm going to see him—I tell you! (*Comes down c. to L. of table*)

SAJI. (*L. of CONSTANCE*) No can do. Mista Jay velly, velly sick.

CONSTANCE. Oh, he is, is he?

SAJI. Yes.

CONSTANCE. (*c.*) I knew they were framing something.

SAJI. He double sick, two doctors, two nurses. No have pain. No can see anybody. Velly, velly sick.

CONSTANCE. (*Backing SAJI to D.*) It's a fraud! He *isn't* sick. And what did he mean by having me taken down a service lift and left in a cellar? I'll get to the bottom of this.

SAJI. (*c.*) You got bottom pretty damn quick.

CONSTANCE. I'm a wreck. And I had to bribe the Janitor. *Where* is he? *Where* have they taken him? (*Crosses back of table to R. of it*)

SAJI. (*Moving a step to table*) Nurse take him to bedloom.

CONSTANCE. (*Crosses to R. of table*) Bedroom!

SAJI. (*Looks to R.*) More better you go now. (*Moves to L. of table*)

(*CONSTANCE crosses quickly with SAJI trying to stop her.*)

CONSTANCE. Sick, indeed! It's a heartless, cruel, wicked imposture! (*Starts to go to R.*)

SAJI. (*Nervously*) No, no, no can do. Docta tell nurse girl maybe he die.

CONSTANCE. (*To front of table*) Indeed! We'll see. (*Turns, comes face to face with MISS DURANT, who enters and firmly closes the door behind her. The two women eye each other at R. CONSTANCE utters a little scream of surprise*) Oh! I wish to go in there to see Mr. Jay.

MISS DURANT. (*At door R.*) It's quite impossible.

CONSTANCE. (*Backs a step, almost in furious tears*) So you're the nurse. (*Backs to front of table. MISS DURANT slowly walks to R. of table as the scene progresses*)

MISS DURANT. (*Quietly*) I am the nurse.

CONSTANCE. I want to see Mr. Jay.

MISS DURANT. (*Moves towards table*) I have the doctor's explicit orders that he is to see no one. If you will leave your name and address I will see that you are notified daily. You will attend to that Saji? (*Starts to clear table*)

SAJI. (*Anxiously, backing a step*) Yes—ev'ry day—I tell you evelything. You go now, missy.

CONSTANCE. This is an outrage! (*Crosses to L. C.*)

MISS DURANT. It is a misfortune.

CONSTANCE. There isn't a word of truth—I knew it.

MISS DURANT. (*R. of table*) If you please—Saji, show **this** lady out.

(SAJI goes up C.)

SAJI. Yes, pleasure, please.

CONSTANCE. (*Crosses to L. of table*) You'll be

sorry—(*She turns on MISS DURANT*) You went into this—I don't care *what* they paid you.

MISS DURANT. (*Firmly*) If you please.

CONSTANCE. (*Crosses to sofa L. c.—Thumping herself down on sofa*) I won't go. I'll sit right here till I see him.

MISS DURANT. (*To back of table*) Do you wish to submit to the indignity of being carried out?

CONSTANCE. You don't dare, either of you. (*Exits up c.*)

(*Enter PAT wheeling the mover in front of him.*)

CONSTANCE looks up in terror and screams, makes one bound for the door and runs for it, The others look after her in amazement.

CONSTANCE bumps against PAT who is upset on the floor.)

PAT. (*Picking himself up*) Howly Saints! She's nutty to! (*SAJI exits up c. laughing—PAT throws the last empty box which is up c. to L. of center doors on the mover*)

MISS DURANT. (*Moves up R. c.*) Saji, lock the outside door after her. (*To PAT*) Janitor—

PAT. (c.) Superintendant, ma'am.

MISS DURANT. (*Comes down R. c.*) My mistake. You don't have to move out anything more, and that door *must* be kept closed and locked.

PAT. Yes miss. Sure, Miss, I don't want them nuts loose in me halls no more than you. (*Exits up c.*)

MISS DURANT. Oh! Saji. Will you get Mr. Jay's dinner please. (*Goes up c. and closes doors*)

SAJI. Yes, Miss. (*Crosses to down L. and exit*)

JAY. (*Wheeling himself in R.*) She gone?

MISS DURANT. (*Crosses back of table to down*

R. *Crossing to bedroom and speaking as she opens the door*) She's gone. I'm sure *she'd* better see a doctor. Wait— (JAY *turns chair at door to face front*) I'll wheel you. (*Returns, wheeling JAY towards c.*)

JAY. (*Settles himself in chair*) Oh, thank goodness you got rid of her!

MISS DURANT. (*Wheeling JAY to c.*) Don't worry. I'll see that nobody troubles you. And now, how's the appetite—hungry?

JAY. (c.) Thirsty. (*Turns chair c. to face front*) Oh, I say, we'll split a little bottle, won't we?

MISS DURANT. Nurses never drink.

JAY. It isn't any fun drinking alone.

MISS DURANT. (*Starts to turn chair to c.*) But you're not having fun, you're ill.

JAY. Oh!

(*Enter SAJI.*)

MISS DURANT. (*Goes to c., takes tray from SAJI and comes R. of table, puts tray down. SAJI stands back of table*) And here's your tray.

(JAY *moves chair to L. of table.*)

JAY. (c.) This is too early for dinner. I dine at eight.

MISS DURANT. (*Arranging tray*) You go to bed at eight.

JAY. The deuce I go to bed at eight!

SAJI. That all?

MISS DURANT. Mr. Jay may have a little champagne. (SAJI *crosses down L. MISS DURANT prepares tray for JAY—Saji stops L., of tray*)

SAJI. She good nurse. (*Exit L. I.*)

JAY. (*Wheeling himself up to L. of table.*)

Sniffing) Um — um — chicken broth. Good! Where's your plate?

MISS DURANT. I have my dinner later.

JAY. Then I can't eat! (*Wheels back to up c.*)

MISS DURANT. Yes you can too. Come! (*Takes the spoon and tastes. JAY playfully swings chair while being persuaded by MISS DURANT, then wheels chair to table*)

JAY. (*Holding out spoon to MISS DURANT*) Now you taste. I'll yell if you don't.

MISS DURANT. (*Back of table*) Give me that spoon. Don't act like a child. (*Comes to between table and JAY, takes spoon from him, picks up soup*) Now, open your mouth. There! (*Holding spoon to JAY's mouth*) All the soup—all of it! (*JAY take spoonful and smiling, wheels backwards up c. Then forward for more soup, approaching her with open mouth. Repeated four times. The fourth time he starts chair wheeling past MISS DURANT, taking soup in his mouth as he passes her. Then wheels to c.*)

JAY. Say, Nursey, you're a peach.

MISS DURANT. (*Returns to R. of table*) Peach? It's not on your diet list.

JAY. Oh yes it is. The doctors prescribed one.

MISS DURANT. When?

JAY. When they sent you. I have to be humored.

MISS DURANT. Well, what else am I doing? I'm spoiling you.

JAY. No, you're not. What's that—sole? (*Wheels chair to table*)

MISS DURANT. Nice fresh sole. (*SAJI enters. Crosses to behind table L.*) And here's your champagne. (*She takes a service tray with champagne and two glasses from SAJI. SAJI crosses interestedly, shrugs*)

JAY. Ah Saji, you're a good boy. You knew enough to bring two glasses.

SAJI. (*Back of table*) Me got wisdom.

JAY. Here. (*At table. Extends his glass to Nurse*) Drink my health! Please!

MISS DURANT. No, Mr. Jay.

JAY. But you've got to, I'm ill. Now please!

MISS DURANT. No, thank you.

JAY. Saji, take my dinner away. (*Backs away*)

MISS DURANT. No, Saji, no!

JAY. Do as I tell you.

MISS DURANT. No!

JAY. Yes!

SAJI. (*Looking at both*) Excuse please, who's boss?

MISS DURANT. I am!

SAJI. Yes, Miss. (*Laughs—SAJI crosses to the door L. JAY turns when SAJI is at the door*)

JAY. Come here, Saji!

SAJI. She's boss. (*Looking at JAY*) You got new boss. (*Laughs. Exit L.*)

MISS DURANT. Eat your sole.

JAY. (*Laughs*) Eat your sole!—it sounds devilish, doesn't it? (*Wheels up to table*) You won't drink my health?

MISS DURANT. How can I when you're ill? Well then—(*She takes her glass, they clink*) Here's to your speedy recovery—there! (*She sips*)

JAY. (*Dismayed, puts glass down*) Speedy recovery? You want to get rid of me?

MISS DURANT. (*R. of table*) Get rid of you? Of course I don't. (*JAY starts to take her hand. MISS DURANT moves it away*) But you're not eating.

JAY. Say "Please, Reggie, for my sake."

MISS DURANT. I don't know you well enough to call you "Reggie."

JAY. But you're going to. Besides I'm taking a chance. I don't know a bally thing about you, and here I am in your power.

MISS DURANT. (*Laughs, leans over towards him*) Well, then, please Reggie, for my sake, eat your sole.

JAY. For you sake, I'd eat anything. Speaking of souls—tell me about yourself.

MISS DURANT. (*Gets chair up R., places it R. of table, sits R. of table*) Oh no, let's talk about you—wouldn't you rather—most men would.

JAY. No, I'd rather hear about you.

MISS DURANT. Shall I begin at the beginning?

JAY. From the day you were born——

MISS DURANT. Oh, but I'm not interesting.

JAY. Oh yes you are. Tell me Nursey, why did you take up nursing?

MISS DURANT. Well, I come of a family who for generations have been famous.

JAY. I can believe that all right.

MISS DURANT. Yes—famous as dog lovers. (*JAY registers*) I was so successful with my family of delicate Pekingese that I realized my talent for nursing.

JAY. Oh, you're chaffing me.

MISS DURANT. Oh, no!

JAY. I want the real story.

MISS DURANT. But you don't think that was a nice story? All my patients like it very much.

JAY. Oh come on, Nursey. Tell me the real story. (*JAY wheels chair back up C. and down again*)

MISS DURANT. Well, if you insist, my father was a stock broker.

JAY. (*Slowly eating. To MISS DURANT*) Go on, your father was a broker——

MISS DURANT. My father lost everything in the

world in the panic. Poor father couldn't stand poverty, so he—beat it. (JAY registers and jerks his chair) It was an awful shock for there were six of us—all girls—and something had to be done. Mother went on the stage with five of the girls—that made a sextette.

JAY. (*Throws down knife and fork*) This is interesting!

MISS DURANT. But very sad. So there was no place for me. I'm not clever. I can't sing, and I can't dance—because I'm knock-kneed.

JAY. (*Registers*) Oh, I don't believe a word of it. (*Backing away to c.* MISS DURANT laughs) But you have got to tell the real story. Please!

MISS DURANT. (*Rises*) The real story isn't interesting. You wouldn't like it.

JAY. Oh yes, I would. I'd read the telephone book all day if it only had your name in it.

MISS DURANT. Of course if you want a lot of characters and very little plot—Your napkin please. (*Reaches for it. She starts gathering up the lunch things*)

JAY. Don't you bother, that's Saji's business.

MISS DURANT. Oh, no, it's the nurse's business.

JAY. Your business is to soothe and console me. It's your duty.

MISS DURANT. I only soothe and console when on duty, it's 7 o'clock now. I'm off duty. (*Walking with tray to l. i. Exits*)

JAY. You can't soothe and console me by leaving me. Oh I say. Come back here! Confound it, Nursey—nursey—(*Starts after her, wheeling furiously—She looks at him with a teasing smile and shuts the door, when the door opens, revealing MISS HEPWORTH in uniform. JAY looks at her, grabs the wheels of his chair and backs frantically to c. and stands up in chair*) Who are you?

MISS HEPWORTH. (*To L. c.*) I'm the night nurse.

JAY. (*Rising in his chair*) Do I have to spend the night with you?

MISS HEPWORTH. (*Puts hands on hips*) Yes.

JAY. Good night nurse! (*Collapses in chair*)

Curtain.

ACT II

SCENE: JAY's bedroom. One week later. 9:00 A.

M. JAY is lying in bed, humped up. MISS HEPWORTH is lying on settee between the bed and the window, still on duty. JAY's bed is a low bedstead with low footboard, so that he can be plainly seen. Bottles of sherry, baskets of fruit, etc. on table L. c. JAY's dressing-gown hangs within reach on a chair; his slippers are by the bedside. Stage semi-dark. Electric stand lamp lighted—at bedside. He looks at HEPWORTH—gives a grunting snore. SAJI puts his head in at the door and reconnoiters—tip-toes in. HEPWORTH snores, heavily. JAY turns and sees SAJI, and begins waving at him to keep quiet. SAJI crosses to L. of HEPWORTH, looks at her and grins.

JAY. Sh! Sh!

SAJI. (*Crosses to above bed*) I come like silences of night times. (*HEPWORTH snores*) She no wake up. (*SAJI by this time is in front of HEPWORTH; he looks forward and peers at her, making an awful face as if nauseated*)

JAY. (*Watching*) Well, how do you like the sleeping beauty?

SAJI. (*Gesture of disgust—In a raucous whisper*) My country we use 'em scare birds off rice. (*Points at HEP.*)

JAY. It would. (SAJI starts to go, nearly falling into HEP) What did you come for, anyway?

SAJI. (Crosses down) I got one terror-gram. (Goes to head of bed—He hands out telegram)

JAY. You got a terror-gram—well, maybe you're right. (HEP snores, they both hang suspended, afraid that she will wake. She gives a comfortable snort and settles back. They sigh simultaneously with relief. JAY opens the telegram, his face gathers into a puzzled frown) When did this "terror-gram" come?

SAJI. It just come.

JAY. (Reading) "Mr. Reginald Jay. This is the 17th of March. Do you remember? Constance." Now what does she mean by that? Saji, do you remember anything particular that happened on the 17th of March?

SAJI. I know all light.

JAY. Well, it's more than I do—what's the answer?

SAJI. Pattlick glet dlunk.

JAY. So it is! St. Patrick's day!

SAJI. Patlick—Pat—grouchy Janitor get dlunk. Make me much insult.

JAY. (Still more mystified) But why the dickens should Constance pick on that?

SAJI. Maybe he make her insult too.

(HEP stirs.)

JAY. Sh! (HEP starts, yawns and wakes—JAY throws himself back on the bed and jerks the covers over his head. SAJI falls on stomach below bed)

MISS HEPWORTH. (Yawns—pulls herself together. Rises, yawns and moves chairs up c., looks at bed and thinking JAY asleep crosses to table and takes drink. Then crosses to below bed and sees JAY asleep. Crosses to table for more drink, then

crosses to SAJI) You again! How dare you follow me like this! (*SAJI crosses to c.—R. C. to SAJI*) You appear to forget that this is a sick room. (*Points L.*) Go!

SAJI. (*Crosses to door L.*) You make me sick. (*He starts for the door again*)

JAY. (*Weakly, imploringly*) Saji, don't go.

(SAJI stops.)

HEP. Wery well, the patient must be humored. You may remain—(*SAJI starts to cross back*) but don't come near me. And now, Mr. Jay—(*Crosses to up-side of bed after taking pills from table, HEP holds up restraining hand—SAJI up L. C.*)

JAY. Oh—oh—(*Groans*)

HEP. It's time for your pill. (*JAY groans and dives under covers. MISS HEP takes pill and approaches the bed. HEP raises him with difficulty to a sitting posture, revealing a suit of noisy pajamas. She offers him the pill. He looks at her and is unable to take it*) Come—come—you've had an excellent night.

JAY. I know. I haven't disturbed your snoring once.

MISS HEP. Do you mean to insinuate that I slept while on duty!

JAY. Of course not—of course not! How could I?

HEP. You've groaned a good deal but on the whole you've had a very good night.

JAY. Oh, I have, have I?

HEP. Here's your pill. (*Puts pill in JAY's mouth—JAY tries to take pill, gets it stuck in his throat. HEP turns to SAJI*) Water! (*SAJI picks up sherry from table, meanwhile HEP slaps JAY on back. He swallows pill. SAJI hands sherry to HEP.*

She drinks it) I'll take another little sip of this sherry. It restores one's strength after a night of nursing. (*Crosses to table*)

SAJI. She drink like fish.

HEP. (*Sits R. of it, helps herself to all the dainties on table*) I dislike ever to say anything when I'm employed in the house of others, but to maintain my strength is my duty! I had a most unsatisfactory supper. That Oriental—(*Points to SAJI*)—takes pleasure in tramping the halls during my hours of sleep. Miss Durant persists in leaving me all of her work to do.

JAY. (*Sitting up and crawling to foot of bed*) Now, see here, Miss Hepworth, Miss Durant doesn't do anything of the sort—it's you—you leave everything for her to do—and I wish you'd stop it.

HEP. (*Crosses to upside of bed—SAJI crosses to above table*) Indeed! (*JAY dives under covers*) So that's what you think. (*Pulls cover back*) I'll have you understand that I'm a decent nurse. (*SAJI start to remove sherry but is stopped by HEP*) Put that down! (*SAJI puts decanter down—To SAJI*) I'm here to nurse—exclusively.

JAY. Well, I wish you weren't here to nurse me.

HEP. (*R. c. foot of bed*) Indeed! I am only a nurse and I must overlook your insults. But I certainly shall complain to the physicians of my inhuman treatment while here.

JAY. Well, what do you want me to do, give you a little kiss?

HEP. (*Moves to c.*) I shall give up the case.

JAY. Good.

HEP. (*Turns—crosses to foot of bed*) Only my duty keeps me here.

JAY. It is only the free lunch that keeps you here.

HEP. (*To c.*) I shall certainly leave if my powers of endurance are over-taxed.

JAY. Tax! It's the first time I ever liked that word. Oh for heaven's sake, get out of here and let me lay.

HEP. (*Crosses to table. Taking another drink of sherry*) Thank heaven, I shall be off duty at ten o'clock. (*JAY leans over, takes large silver clock from the night table, sits up in bed and deliberately moves the hands ahead, as MISS HEP smacks her lips, and pours more sherry; she then makes a selection of all the good things and places them in her apron pockets, talking all the while*) I trust you have no objection to my taking a trifle.

JAY. Not to a trifle.

HEP. This place is so badly managed that I fear I shall hardly have the breakfast that my hours of fasting make necessary. Not that I ever permit myself anything but the simplest diet. But when great responsibilities arise they must be met by a corresponding number of calories. (*Moves to mirror L. and powders her nose*)

JAY. Isn't she pretty?

HEP. (*Rises, crosses to front of table*) Besides to one in your condition such foods as these are unsuitable. I'm sorry there aren't any alligator pears, and in these troublesome times I despise wilful waste. (*Puts apple in pocket and picks up crumbs on table and eats them. Looks in mirror L. A final drink of sherry quenches her flow of language*)

JAY. (*Holding up the clock*) Oh look! It's after ten now. You can go—you're off——

MISS HEP. So it is. How time flies. And I trust you will tell your Asiatic menial to keep away from my bedroom. I do *not* wish to be disturbed. (*Starts to go L.*)

JAY. (*To SAJI*) Good Lord! Do *you* want to disturb her?

SAJI. No, no.

(MISS HEP *returns to C.*)

..

MISS HEP. And while I am speaking of such unpleasant matters, permit me also to add that the attitude of the Hungarian Janitor of this building is no less than insulting.

JAY. What, Pat, too?

HEP. He pays no attention whatsoever when it has been necessary to call his attention to mismanagement.

JAY. What, no attention?

HEP. No worthy attention. And as to his insinuations and innuendoes—well, I'm a lady—(*Exits*)

JAY. (*Calling after her*) You're a white house picket. (*Bell*)

SAJI. Excuse please. Bell ring. (*Crosses to L.*) I go out on door. (*Exits*)

JAY. And I go out on shutter! (*Gets out of bed, puts on slippers and dressing gown and crosses to table. He mops his brow, picks up sherry decanter, and starts to pour, the bottle is empty. He looks at it critically and then at the door*) Gee, the old girl must have hollow legs. (*A tap on the door*)

and SAJI enters. SAJI crosses to L. of JAY and L. of table)

SAJI. Excuse please, Mista Jay. Doctors send lady massage.

JAY. (R. of SAJI) A lady-what? I don't get you.

SAJI. Massage—she say Dr. Flexner—Dr. Widner send her—make massage——

JAY. No, don't get you.

SAJI. Please, what you call lady makes slap—lap. (*Pats himself, trying to make himself understood*)

JAY. (*Crosses to bed*) Lady massage! Oh, no! (*Takes running jump over footboard into bed. Gathers bed-clothes about him for protection*) I don't want a massage.

SAJI. I tell her go 'way!

CONSTANCE. (*Enters veiled—Outside, to SAJI*) Go way, my man—doctor's orders. (*Pushing SAJI out*)

SAJI. (*Outside*) Mista Jay “no can do.”

(CONSTANCE crosses to foot of bed and pinches JAY's foot.)

JAY. (*Looks out of bed clothes*) Constance! Oh, it's you! How dare you come in my bedroom?

CONSTANCE. Now, Reggie, how dare you try to balk me? Of course, I understand your loyalty to John, but how about your loyalty to me—(*Leaning over bed*) Of course I know people will talk at first, but isn't it worth it, in the end?

JAY. The end! That's just it—the end—My finish.

CONSTANCE. (*Crosses down to lower foot of*

bed) Reggie, dear, *we* must take a few chances.

JAY. (*Widly. Rolls over*) Help! Help!

CONSTANCE. (*Going right on—To upside of bed*) Sh! What will they think of your masseuse? And don't you think I'm taking my chances, coming here this way?

JAY. You're taking chances on *me*.

CONSTANCE. (*Interrupting*) You—you're taking no chances. You're a man. My dear boy let me tell you that I know *all*. About everything here—(*Comes down foot of bed*)

JAY. Constance, your place is in your home—go to it.

CONSTANCE. (*Sitting on the bed beside him*) A real home—yes; Reggie, *won't* you stop this silly pretense of illness, and be a witness for me about that time in Spain—with my husband. There's a good Reggie-weggie—(*Sits bed L. of JAY*)

JAY. Keep off! Let me alone. (*She places her hand on his brow. He wriggles and fights, trying to reach his dressing gown. Rises against head of bed, covering himself with covers*)

CONSTANCE. Don't be absurd. Listen. (*She seats herself on the edge of the bed again. JAY retreats to its extreme limits*) Be a good old dear, and help your little Constance. Don't you understand—it's—for us *both*—you and me, Reggie.

JAY. (*Sits on bed*) Oh—oh——

CONSTANCE. Look, Reggie—(*She pulls out from the bosom of her dress a crumpled letter*) I was looking over your dear letters last night. I brought this one with me to-day to remind you.

JAY. (*Eagerly*) Letters—did you bring 'em

all? We'll burn 'em right now. (*Tries to grab letter*)

CONSTANCE. (*On foot of bed*) Burn them—never!

JAY. I want to talk to you about those letters.

CONSTANCE. I know, you're just like every other man. You don't want *any* woman to have *any* letters—I tell you they are my precious souvenirs.

JAY. But, Constance, suppose—they fell into your husband's hands?

CONSTANCE. They can't. They're perfectly safe.

JAY. And I've busted a lung trying to make Weems consent to a reconciliation—well, he's got to, you've got to, that's all.

CONSTANCE. I don't want a reconciliation! Reggie—did you get my telegram?

JAY. The one about Pat's getting drunk?

CONSTANCE. Pat? What are you talking about? I telegraphed you to remember the 17th of March. Reggie, don't you know what day this is?

JAY. Porkless Friday.

CONSTANCE. To-day is the anniversary of our meeting, five years ago.

JAY. Constance, what makes you so confoundedly sentimental?

CONSTANCE. You, I guess. (*Tickles him*)

JAY. Have pity! Go away! I'm a sick man I tell you.

CONSTANCE. But listen to this dear, and you'll feel better.

JAY. No, no.

CONSTANCE. Don't be ashamed, it's not the least bit mushy, just nice. It begins "Just a year ago," you wrote that letter on the first anniversary of our meeting. (*She tickles him*)

JAY. (*Starts*) Say, now, Constance, you're a wild woman. Emotion is bad for me, honest it is!

CONSTANCE. Lovely Dee. It's just a year ago since dear Alice introduced us to Wonderland. Do you remember, and I am still the devoted Tweedledum of the most beautiful of Tweedledees who by her great clemency lets me call her Dee-Dee.

JAY. Damn, damn.

CONSTANCE. (*Sentimental*) A pretty thought isn't it?

JAY. Very pretty.

CONSTANCE. You always have such a beautiful way of saying things. (*Enthusiastic*) Listen to this. Do you know what it says here?

JAY. What does it say?

CONSTANCE. (*Giggles*) I don't blame the Walrus for being jealous.

JAY. The Walrus? Why should a Walrus be jealous?

CONSTANCE. (*Laughing*) Don't you remember Doctor Macklyn came to the Alice in Wonderland Ball all dressed up like a Walrus?

JAY. Oh, Dr. Macklyn, the Walrus!

CONSTANCE. He used to write me almost as pretty letters as you did.

JAY. Did he?

CONSTANCE. And listen—(*Reading*) "But will the fairest of Dee-Dees come to supper to-night again? If so call me up at the office. I'll be waiting with my poor little heart right in the receiver for a "yes" from you to Tweedle-Dummy.

JAY. Dummy. Did I write that? Oh my Lord! This is awful. I'll swear I never wrote it, never, never.

CONSTANCE. (*Indignant*) Reggie—what's the matter with you—are you mad?

JAY. Mad—mad—(*Catching at straws*)

CONSTANCE. Hush, be quiet!

JAY. (*Pretending madness*) You've said it, you've said it yourself, I'm mad. It's Alice—it's the tea-party. I'm the hatter. I'm the March hare. You've said it.

CONSTANCE. (*Rising alarmed, backing c.*) Why, you—you look awful!

JAY. (*Waving his hands, kneeling on bed, salaaming*) I hear bells—the birds are singing. Ah, Yusef, give me my trusty chibook! (*Stands up on bed*)

CONSTANCE. Reggie, if you keep up this foolishness, I shall get angry—and I warn you. (*Crosses to foot of bed*) If you won't testify willingly—you'll go to prison. (*Raising R. hand*)

JAY. (*Waving his hands wildly*) Votes for women!

CONSTANCE. Reggie—I warn you! You know—a woman scorned——

JAY. A woman scorned is twice shy—not much she isn't. (*Grabs bed covers*) Ha, ha. (*CONSTANCE takes hold of sheet while JAY holds bed spread so getting them apart. CONSTANCE gets on bed to prevent JAY going—JAY bounds out of bed on the far side and runs towards the door*) Save me! Save me! (*Enter WEEMS to down L. JAY staggers to foot of bed for support*)

CONSTANCE. My husband! (*At sight of her husband gives one gasp, and ducks down on bed, puts sheet to cover head, then runs into dressing-room. Crawling in stooping position, covered with sheet*)

WEEMS. (*To JAY, laughing*) Oh Reggie, Reggie, who's that?

JAY. It's—(*Looks at the bathroom and at WEEMS and gulps*) It's my massage.

WEEMS. And you calling for help! (*Laughs*) Great heavens did she hurt you as much as that?

JAY. Something awful, awful, I tell you, she's a huge great Swede.

WEEMS. Dear me, why did she run away like that?

JAY. I don't know. I'm too weak for a massage.

WEEMS. That's all right, my boy, I'll discharge her. (*He turns to the door. JAY holds him back*)

JAY. No, no, don't, she'll hurt you. She's liable to hit you on the head with a sponge.

WEEMS. Oh, I see, excuse me—*de trop eh?*—Well discharge her yourself. (*Crosses to c.*) Your affairs are your affairs, my boy. Thank goodness I've no curiosity. Oh Reggie! (*Crosses to L. and exit, laughing*)

CONSTANCE. Has he gone?

JAY. See here, Constance, I'm through.

CONSTANCE. Oh, no you're not.

JAY. I'm disgusted. I'm indignant. Don't you dare to come here again. (*CONSTANCE exclaims, recovers. JAY comes c. WEEMS re-enters*)

WEEMS. Ha, ha, ha. Oh Reggie—(*Sees CONSTANCE—Comes down L.*) Constance! So! You're the masseuse! (*CONSTANCE below bed R. clutching sheet, screams, and covers her head*) And you! (*Turns to JAY who hops into bed over footboard*)

JAY. (*Trying to calm WEEMS*) She got in to interview me that way, honest it was only that. I didn't want you to know. I was afraid you'd think the worst as usual. Oh Lord! She knows I'm ill, she knows I'm dying—I told her so!

WEEMS. You took a chance on this poor sick boy's life.

CONSTANCE. He isn't sick.

WEEMS. You lied your way in here——

JAY. (*Falls on bed*) I'm dying!

CONSTANCE. Oh, very well. I wanted to see how far you'd carry—this travesty. Let me tell you, I'm not deceived—(*Throws sheet on bed, hits JAY*) and now I shall act!

WEEMS. You've been doing it all your life.

CONSTANCE. Ha!

WEEMS. Ha!

JAY. (*Weakly*) Ha, ha!

CONSTANCE. You won't laugh when the courts get through with you. I tell you *I'm not deceived*. (*At foot of bed*)

WEEMS. *Nor* am I. Don't you suppose I know your motive in all this? Don't you suppose I know you've got an infatuation for a bandolined tame-cat parlor-snake.

CONSTANCE. John Weems!

JAY. Not that!

WEEMS. Yes. You've been in love with him for years. Do you suppose you deceive me? Where is your Tweedledum?

(CONSTANCE *draws herself up proudly.*)

JAY. Tweedledum! Oh! Hop. (*Hops back in bed*)

CONSTANCE. (*Too upset and surprised at the assault to resist*) You—you insult me, sir! (*Crosses to up L.*) But you shall see, I'll punish you both. (*Turns to JAY*) To think that I ever left my little white-haired mother for a great brute like you. (*Exit CONSTANCE*)

WEEMS. (*Follows her up c. Looks after her.*
JAY *puts ice-bag on head*) By Jove! Reggie, this is too bad—too bad. Never mind, boy, I shall never forget what you've done for me—never! Who

would dream she'd be so damned clever about it—impersonating a masseuse—damned clever woman, Constance, damned clever. (*Turns to JAY*) Why Reginald, what's the matter—you're white as a sheet. You look positively collapsed.

JAY. I am.

WEEMS. But my boy, why, why—I'll get you a doctor! (*Crosses to up L. C.*)

JAY. (*Explosively*) No! Not a doctor. (*WEEMS crosses to JAY, helps him out of bed. Gets out of bed, balancing ice-bag on his head—crosses to R. of table*)

WEEMS. (*Has helped JAY to chair R. of table*) Here—sit down.

JAY. Oh! Lord! I never had such a turn. I'd rather hunt lions or tigers or—or kill harems! Oh, I'm done. I'm all in. I've got enough. (*Leans on table—WEEMS crosses to bed and gets one of JAY's slippers*)

WEEMS. Here's your slipper.

JAY. Oh I'm too sick for slippers.

WEEMS. (*Having put one on JAY's foot*) Well one will do. (*Back of table*) Cheer up! After all, there's good news—an adjournment. (*WEEMS drinks the drink*) And I've got copies of her whippersnapper's letters.

JAY. (*Alarmed*) Not originals?

WEEMS. No, only copies, but I'm going to get the originals and when I do, ah, ah! (*Crosses to R.*)

JAY. I don't like that laugh.

WEEMS. Reginald, do you know I have obtained a permit to carry a revolver! (*Crosses back to R. of JAY, presses revolver against JAY—JAY exclaims, rises and crosses to L. of table and sits—Crosses to R. C.*) There'd be one Tweedledum less in the world, that's all! Tweedledum, ha! (*Taking out*

a typewritten sheet—Paces to c.) Do you know I can't understand it at all! I can't understand it. (*Crosses back of table*) Constance is clever, damned clever, and this—*Tweedledum of hers* is an illiterate yokel, his grammar, his spelling, anniversary with an n-nannyversary!

JAY. Nanniversary—!

WEEMS. Listen to this!

JAY. No, no, I don't want to.

WEEMS. Listen! "To-day is the nanniversary of our meeting. M-e-a-t-i-n-g—meeting. Lovely Dee." I suppose that's short for Tweedledee. "It's just a year ago since Alice introduced us to wonderland. Do you remember? And I am still the devoted Tweedledum of the most beautiful of Tweedledees, who of her great clemency spelt with a K——

JAY. Ought to be a L.

WEEMS. Lets me call her "Dee-dee!" Oh Lord! And to think that such an ignoramus, such a nincompoop, should be a recognized authority! (*Crosses to c.*)

JAY. (*Rises*) A—a recognized authority on—on what?

WEEMS. The illiterate poppin jay. (*Crosses down R.*)

JAY. What's he an authority—on?

WEEMS. (*Steps mysteriously to c.*) Do you remember that—Macklyn—the man who used to be so in love with—(*Darkly*) Who is still in love with her?

JAY. The Walrus!

WEEMS. No—the Tweedledum——

JAY. (*Relieved*) Oh, you think Dr. Macklyn is Tweedledum.

WEEMS. Yes, Dr. Macklyn.

JAY. (*Relieved—rises*) Macklyn—oh—yes—

yes Dr. Macklyn—oh yes, of course! How stupid of me and I've been worrying. (*Crosses to L. of WEEMS*)

WEEMS. What

JAY. (*Quickly correcting himself*) I mean wondering who it was.

WEEMS. Yes, it's one thing when she can disgrace *me*, and of course, she's peeved about the Letice Montjoy business, and, on my honor, Reggie, I *was* a bit of a fool, you know. Constance is a damn fine figure of a woman. Damn fine. (*Crosses to down L. C.*) Once I can get the shoe on the other foot—damn pretty foot my wife has, too.

JAY. You bet! (*R. of WEEMS*)

WEEMS. What!

JAY. That's what you said.

WEEMS. Just pretend to be ill a few days more and I fancy I can promise the whole mess will be all right.

JAY. (*Making a last effort*) Now see here, Guardy. Can't you drop this retaliation thing. Just be reconciled.

WEEMS. Why, I'd never be master in my own house. I want Constance subdued.

JAY. So do I! *Oh so do I!* (*Crosses to bed—He is on the point of making a clean breast of it but realizes the danger and the uselessness*) Oh, I'm sinking. Call my nurse. (*Crosses to R.*)

WEEMS. Your nurse. Certainly my boy.

JAY. My *day* nurse. (*Drops onto bed*)

WEEMS. Oh Miss Durant! (*With a knowing wink at foot of bed*) Damn pretty woman, Miss Durant, damn pretty! You're a lucky dog. (*MISS DURANT enters. WEEMS to C. DURANT crosses and puts tray from table L. C. to table up L. then to C.*)

WEEMS. Oh, good morning, Miss Durant.
(*Takes her hand*)

MISS DURANT. Good morning, Mr. Weems.

JAY. Good morning. Good morning. (*Getting no attention, turns and says good morning to the pillows*)

WEEMS. Be gentle to the patient, he's a nice boy, be kind and tender as you would be to myself.

JAY. Leave my nurse alone.

WEEMS. (*Nurse crosses to R. C. WEEMS crosses to foot of bed*) All right, my boy! I'm off. Just wanted to tell you it won't be long now before you're out.

JAY. Thank you.

WEEMS. Cheer up—cheer up, my boy. Let this be a lesson to you. Never write letters, it's cost many a good man his life. Never write letters! (*Goes up C. to L. of DURANT, he bows deeply and cocks a wicked old leer at her*) Miss Durant, good morning.

MISS DURANT. Good morning.

WEEMS. Be kind to him—be gentle——

DURANT. Good morning. (*Cutting him off*)

WEEMS. (*Crushed*) Er — good morning. (*Crosses to door L., exit WEEMS, sticking head back for a last look at MISS DURANT, winks*)

JAY. Oh, I wish I'd never learned to write.

DURANT. (*Cross and sit down side of bed*) Dear me! Why you're trembling!

JAY. Oh, I am. (*Holds out treampling hand; she takes it*) This one's trembling too. (*Holds out other*)

MISS DURANT. (*Her hand on his brow*) And your head—?

JAY. Burning!

MISS DURANT. This won't do—this won't do at all.

JAY. I'm dying. (*Puts his head on her shoulder*)

MISS DURANT. Oh no you're *not*.

JAY. Yes, I am.

MISS DURANT. I'm taking care of you.

JAY. Oh!

MISS DURANT. And all my patients get *well*.

JAY. (*Jealously*) Oh do they? Do you save 'em all?

MISS DURANT. All?

JAY. Do you have many men patients?

DURANT. Oh yes, a great many.

JAY. Do you save them all too.

MISS DURANT. Positively *all*!

JAY. I think that's wasteful.

MISS DURANT. You're just over-tired. You've seen too many people.

JAY. Oh, if you only *knew*!

MISS DURANT. You must be quiet. I'm going to take your temperature. (*Takes thermometer from table at head of bed*)

JAY. Are you? (*MISS DURANT goes to bathroom—sings*) Beautiful voice!

MISS DURANT. (*Enters from bathroom with thermometer*) Come now—open—your mouth.

JAY. And shut my eyes? (*She takes out the thermometer, stands L. of JAY who sits on bed*) Nursey, you take it from me, it's a lot safer to keep your eyes open and your mouth shut.

MISS DURANT. Not when you're running a temperature.

JAY. That's exactly the time — when you're all het up.

MISS DURANT. Come now, do as I tell you.

JAY. I don't want to shut my eyes.

MISS DURANT. Then don't. Here! (*She holds out thermometer*)

JAY. I want to look at you.

MISS DURANT. Very well. (*She pops the thermometer into his mouth; he looks at her like a sick calf—Goes up and gets chart from table up R. and comes back to bed, turns to chart, JAY tries to see it*) Patient not allowed to see his chart. (*Holds chart away from him*)

JAY. (*Takes thermometer in and out of mouth like a cigarette*) Nursey, you saved my life.

MISS DURANT. That's my vocation, Mr. Jay. (*Putting thermometer back into his mouth and crosses to table to get pencil. Returns to bed*)

JAY. (*Mumbling through the thermometer*) Thank heavens I've got your hour fixed from ten to ten. I can miss Hep almost altogether—sleep right through her—that's a comfort, anyway.

MISS DURANT. (*Marks chart and puts it up R. C.*) Now I'll get you ready for breakfast.

JAY. But I want my bath.

MISS DURANT. No, the doctor says a little nourishment first.

JAY. Oh, Nursey!

MISS DURANT. And in half an hour, the bath. (*At finish of this, enter SAJI with breakfast wagon*) Good morning, Saji. (*Goes in bathroom*)

SAJI. (*Crossing to C.*) Good morning, good morning, missie—

JAY. Ah-ha! Saji.

SAJI. Nice breakfast for you Mista Jay! Puts wagon at down side of bed.

JAY. What have you got there?

SAJI. (*Foot of bed*) Glape fluit, tea, toast and scandal egg.

JAY. Scandal eggs! (*Lifts cover from dish*)

SAJI. Excuse please, how you feel now?

JAY. *Much worse, Saji—how do you feel?*

SAJI. I feel much worse than you, Mista Jay.
(*At foot of bed*)

JAY. What's wrong, Saji?

SAJI. Very sick, Mista Jay.

JAY. Can I get you anything?

SAJI. Yes please, I like you get me nurse.

JAY. Saji, I'll go you 50-50. I'll be sick in the day time and you can be sick at night.

SAJI. (*With an awful face*) No thank you. I all right now. (*Exits L*)

(DURANT enters from bathroom.)

DURANT. Oh what a nice breakfast.

JAY. (*Attacking his breakfast*) M'mmm Nursey had your breakfast?

MISS DURANT. Long ago. (*Sits foot of bed*) Salt and pepper?

JAY. No. Some tabasco. (DURANT helping him) Just a dash. (DURANT puts tobasco on vigorously. Enter SAJI) I said a dash—not a splash.

SAJI. Flowers, for Mista Jay! (Bus. MISS DURANT rises, crosses to c. and takes box of American beauties from SAJI. JAY is all excited interest. SAJI exits)

MISS DURANT. (*Opens box looking for note. To back of table*) Oh, Roses.

(JAY starts eating and burns his mouth with tobasco.)

JAY. Oh! (*Drinks water*)

DURANT. Oh, I'm so sorry. Here's a note, Mr. Jay. (*Hands up note*)

JAY. You can read it!

MISS DURANT. (*Opens note and reads*) "Angel child.

JAY. That's me.

MISS DURANT. "I can't bear to think of you ill, perhaps dying. It seems so strange to be sending you roses. Do try and get well and get back to our original arrangement. Your own Maisie."

(SAJI *enters with a number of boxes and a small rose tree in pot.*)

JAY. That's a dear old lady I used to buy my vegetables from.

SAJI. (*Crosses to back of table*) More flowers, Mista Jay.

JAY. I feel like Galli Curci's farewell.

MISS DURANT. (*Opens the box and reads card*) "Blue water lilies from your heart-broken little mermaid." (*Looks at JAY and smiles knowingly*) I suppose she's the lady you used to buy your fish from.

JAY. That was two summers ago. She's a sticker.

MISS DURANT. And a rose tree, from Rose.

JAY. Poor little Rose. (*Looks at the rose tree*) She blew herself.

(*Enter PAT L., carrying funeral wreath.*)

PAT. (*Foot of bed*) For the love o' Mike, Mr. Jay, somebody sent you a wreath.

JAY. What?

PAT. Somebody must be looking forward to your wake.

MISS DURANT. (*To L. of PAT—Reading the card on funeral wreath*)

"Here lies Reggie, the champion liar
If Gabriel raised him he'd go him higher
He shuffled home on a heaving deck
But we bet he ain't cashed in no check."

JAY. Not yet.

DURANT. From the Thursday night Poker Club.
Oh. (*Crosses to back of table*)

JAY. (*Poppy-eyedly incensed*) Nursey you write on that card "He rose from the dead for his nurse's sake. And is ready to play them for any stake." Send that back and tell them they're the dead ones.

PAT. (*Crosses to L.*) Sure I will, and we'll not be havin' any funerals around here. It's bad luck so it is and you're too young to die. And beggin' your pardon, Mr. Jay, while I'm here, will you be after telling your night nurse to keep away from me, a respectable married man with eight children. I don't want—(*Exits grumbling*)

MISS DURANT. (*Busy fixing flowers—Back of table*) Oh here are some violets. Mr. Jay, why they're directed to me. How odd! Who can have sent them?

JAY. I sent them.

MISS DURANT. You didn't.

JAY. I did, and you'll get a bunch every morning. (*JAY starts to get out of bed*)

MISS DURANT. (*Crosses to JAY, upside of bed*) You go right back and stay—still. (*JAY hastily gets back under covers*) Cover up—you must be careful. Don't forget you're ill.

JAY. All right nursey, you're the boss. What's the matter, don't you like violets?

MISS DURANT. Of course. (*Picks up boxes and takes them to chair down L. over which hangs a mirror*)

JAY. Aren't you going to wear them?

MISS DURANT. Nurses aren't allowed to.
(Crosses to chair L.)

JAY. Say, Nursesey.

MISS DURANT. Yes? (She has her back to him,
setting boxes on chair down L. at L.)

JAY. Look!

(She looks in mirror.)

MISS DURANT. (Smiling in mirror) I can see
you right in there. (Points to mirror)

JAY. (Crawls to foot of bed) Can you see me?
Then look! (Throws her a kiss. Then quickly gets
back into bed)

MISS DURANT. (Backs toward him and turns
smiling) You silly boy! (Crosses to down side
of bed)

JAY. No, I'm not. I'm just your patient—
patient. Isn't it true?

MISS DURANT. (Gets chart, and then crosses to
foot of bed) Yes, it is true that you've been very
good.

JAY. But I get awful blue sometimes. (Crawl-
ing to foot of bed)

MISS DURANT. Blue—why? (Stands at foot of
bed)

JAY. (Holds her arm) Oh, tired of everything
—myself. You know, when I lie here at night,
listening to the honk of automobiles and the snores
of Hep.

MISS DURANT. Mr. Jay!

JAY. It gives you a lot to think about.

MISS DURANT. What? The snore—or?

JAY. No, the silent loneliness of it all.

MISS DURANT. What! An explorer—lonely?

JAY. (Draws her to him) Nursesey, did you ever

think about getting married?

MISS DURANT. Mr. Jay! (*Moves away a step*)

JAY. What's the matter?

MISS DURANT. (*At foot of bed*) You musn't say things like that to me.

JAY. (*Kneeling on bed and talking to nurse over foot*) Why, what's the matter? I haven't said anything yet. I only asked you a question. Now I'll tell you a secret. I'm crazy about you. I know it's sudden—I've only known you a week, but I can't help that—I've been sudden all my life. Nursey, will you marry me?

MISS DURANT. Mr. Jay!

JAY. What's the matter?

MISS DURANT. You must *not* say such things to me.

JAY. But I've got to. I can't help it. Won't you please marry me?

MISS DURANT. I won't listen. Not professional etiquette.

JAY. Why not? You've got to hear it sooner or later. And, besides, I want to make sure nobody else can marry me——

MISS DURANT. (*With icy determination, disengages herself from JAY's hold and he nearly falls over foot of bed*) Your bath hour, Mr. Jay.

JAY. Now please don't throw cold water on me. (*Sinks on bed*)

MISS DURANT. But the doctors will be here at any moment, and if they find you haven't had your morning bath, it will be a good night nurse for me.

JAY. Oh, I don't care for the doctors.—Nursey, won't you please marry me? (*Gets off bed. Starts to embrace her*)

MISS DURANT. If you don't stop. I'll call the night nurse.

JAY. I'll be good! (*MISS DURANT crosses to*

c.) Come back! Nurse I just couldn't live without you, please marry me.

MISS DURANT. (*Crosses L. of JAY front of bed urging him to bath-room L.*) Hurry up—water not too cold—no shocks.

JAY. (*Hesitating at the door*) Nurse, I don't want to be away from you so long.

MISS DURANT. Never mind the time. Take plenty, and for heaven's sake take your bath. (*Exit JAY to bathroom. He is heard singing and shivering, splash of water, etc.* MISS DURANT *fixes bed, crosses to table L. C., arranges flowers. Picks up violets, kisses them, places them in vase near bed. Crosses to bathroom door and knocks on door*)

JAY'S VOICE. (*Off*) Hello, who is it?

MISS DURANT. Your nurse!

JAY. Day or night?

MISS DURANT. Day.

JAY. Enter. (*Starts to sing again*)

MISS DURANT. (*Knocks at door again*) Mr. Jay, you mustn't sing. It's too great a strain on your heart.

JAY. I dare you to come in and discipline me.

MISS DURANT. (*At door R. shocked*) Mr. Jay—will you behave yourself?

JAY. What for?

(MISS DURANT *goes to table at bedside and is straightening out table, when FLEXNER enters.*)

FLEXNER. Ah good morning, Nurse.

MISS DURANT. Oh, Dr. Flexner!

FLEXNER. (*Crosses back of table to c.*) Well, how's your patient?

MISS DURANT. (*Crosses R. of FLEXNER C.*) I think he's had a little set back this morning.

(JAY sings in bathroom)

FLEXNER. (*Crosses R. of MISS DURANT, gets chart up R. C.*) Indeed. Let me see his chart?

(Enter WIDNER.)

WIDNER. (*Crosses to back of table, puts bag on table*) Why did you leave me to pay the taxi? Good morning Nurse. Where's the patient? (FLEXNER crosses to front of bed, chart in hand. To FLEXNER)

MISS DURANT. (*Coming down c.*) In his bath.

WIDNER. Late, isn't it?

MISS DURANT. He's shaving.

WIDNER. (*Crosses to FLEXNER*) Let me see his chart. (*Takes chart. MISS DURANT picks up flower boxes from chair L.—Enter CHALMERS, Noisily*)

CHALMERS. (*Crosses to L. of table, puts hat down. Hastily crosses to FLEXNER at foot of bed*) Oh, Doctors!

FLEXNER. (*R. C.—R. of CHALMERS*) How dare you burst into a sick room like that?

CHALMERS. Never mind. Where's Jay?

MISS DURANT. In his bath.

CHALMERS. (*Crosses a step to c.*) Oh, well, I—Miss Durant, leave us for a moment, if you please.

MISS DURANT. Certainly. (*Goes out. CHALMERS goes up and closes door*)

WIDNER. (*Coming down to front of bed—WIDNER looking about, fussing with flowers*) Why these flowers in a sick room? (*Crosses to side of bed R.*)

FLEXNER. (*At c.*) He isn't really sick.

WIDNER. But *she* doesn't know it.

CHALMERS. (*Who has been standing by door listening*) I'm not so sure about that! (*Comes to front of table*)

(WIDNER down R. paying no attention, fussing about service table at the head of the bed.)

FLEXNER. (C.) I understand you've secured a postponement——

CHALMERS. Oh, yes, I've got a postponement.

FLEXNER. (C.) Well, you say it as if you'd got a post mortem.

CHALMERS. (C. crosses to L. of WIDNER) I'm not so sure we haven't got something worse.

WIDNER. What—what do you mean?

CHALMERS. (R. of FLEXNER) I'm afraid we're in bad—bad—bad. (*Paces the floor nervously up and down C.*)

WIDNER. Why? What's happened?

FLEXNER. Am I to understand that we are—er—in—difficulties?

CHALMERS. *Difficulties—ha!* We're in a hell of a hole, that's where we are. (*Goes up R. C.*)

WIDNER. But how? But what?

CHALMERS. (*Savagely, coming down to foot of bed*) Mrs. Weems has secured a court order to have your patient examined, that's what. (CHALMERS up L., WIDNER foot of bed)

WIDNER. Examine the patient! (*Sinks on foot of bed. JAY sings*)

FLEXNER. (*Sits R. of table*) Good Lord!

CHALMERS. (*Crossing to L.*) Exactly. Oh, you can wager she's been well advised.

FLEXNER. (*Rises*) But she must have shown justifiable suspicion of fraud before she could get such an order!

CHALMERS. She did!

FLEXNER. She did?

CHALMERS. (L. of table) She says there's a plot. She claims she can prove that his charts show no deviation from the normal.

FLEXNER. (L. c.) His charts! How could she know about his charts. (*Waiving the idea away, goes up c.*)

CHALMERS. Mrs. Weems' lawyers know everything — what he eats, drinks, what he says—and they've been as jolly well right as if they lived right here in these rooms. Someone in this house has been giving information to Mrs. Weems. There's a spy in the house and it *must* be Miss Durant. (*Crosses to c.*)

WIDNER. Miss Durant. (*Sits foot of bed*)

CHALMERS. Yes, Miss Durant.

FLEXNER. Are you sure it's Miss Durant?

CHALMERS. I'm positive, and furthermore do you know that it's Dr. Macklyn Mrs. Weems has had appointed to make the examination.

WIDNER. Dr. Robert Macklyn? (*Rises*)

CHALMERS. Yes, Macklyn, he's been in love with Mrs. Weems for years.

FLEXNER. What has that to do with Miss Durant?

CHALMERS. Miss Durant was one of Macklyn's nurses. She's got to go, and she's got to get out of here before he comes.

WIDNER. (*Crossing to R. of FLEXNER for support*) I knew it! I knew it! I had a premonition!

FLEXNER. Then of course, she's got to go.

CHALMERS. (*Crossing to R. of WIDNER—Coming down R.*) Yes. (*Crosses to R. c.*) This situation has gotten beyond all of us.

WIDNER. (*Goes up c.—Crosses to c.*) Oh, oh, I felt it. I felt it.

FLEXNER. When is he coming?

CHALMERS. To-morrow at three.

WIDNER. (*As JAY sings, FLEXNER front of table*) To-morrow Flexner, at three!

WIDNER. There's nothing for it, we've got to make him sick. (*Leads CHALMERS R. and FLEXNER L. of him to L. C.*)

CHALMERS. Yes.

FLEXNER. Exactly what I was going to suggest.

WIDNER. What'll we use?

CHALMERS. (*Grabs WIDNER's arm and turns him toward him*) Germs, medicine. Anything.

WIDNER. (*To FLEXNER*) He'll never stand up to it.

CHALMERS. You'd better hurry. (*Turns WIDNER to him*)

FLEXNER. (*WIDNER R. of table*) We must get to work immediately. (*Turns WIDNER to him. CHALMERS goes back of table to L.*)

WIDNER. Oh! Do you realize that this makes us guilty of conspiracy?

(*FLEXNER goes up to table up L. and takes drink*)

CHALMERS. I do— and we've got to conspire till he's half dead. But first, I'm going to discharge Miss Durant and get her off the premises before she finds out this too. I'll be right back. (*Exit CHALMERS up L.*)

FLEXNER. (*Comes to L. of table*) Dr. Widner you have your emergency case?

WIDNER. (*Back of table*) Yes, indeed. Fortunately it has just been refilled. (*WIDNER comes to R. of table. FLEXNER to L.—Takes out assortment of dangerous looking surgical instruments, puts them on table. WIDNER holding up blue phial, smiling*) This will give extreme griping pains, and

it produces extreme pallor. (*Pours some medicine into measuring glass*)

FLEXNER. (*L. of table, taking another bottle*) I would suggest Bella-donna in the eyes. The dilation of the pupils gives a strained expression and will produce naturally the symptoms of imperfect vision due to extreme mental debility.

WIDNER. If we had a little more time we could inoculate him with some pernicious—germ.

FLEXNER. That's what we should have done in the first place; by now he would have had a nice case of chicken pox or German measles.

WIDNER. German nothing. He ought to have good American hives. (*Another bottle*) Ah, here we have it—Cannabis—indica——

FLEXNER. Indian hemp, hasheesh. Excellent. Now, if we could only induce him to take this in combination with that. (*He shows WIDNER a bottle, WIDNER smiles delightedly.—Pours a few drops from it into measuring glass*)

WIDNER. Yes, yes. Cannabis has a bitter taste. He will call for water.

FLEXNER. (*Goes up to table L., pours water into glass and brings it to WIDNER. WIDNER puts some pills into glass*) Of course, of course. Hand it to him and then such results.

WIDNER. I'll dissolve a few of these. (*He takes the glass of water and dissolves the pills and puts it on table*) Ah—and whatever you do don't forget your thermometer—that always registers one hundred and four.

FLEXNER. It never leaves me.

WIDNER. Well, that insures his temperature anyway. (*Sits R. of table*)

FLEXNER. Sh! Here he comes (*Goes up c. Sound of yodel. Enter JAY—pink and shining, he yodels up to WIDNER*)

JAY. (c.) Good Lord, what a bunch of crepe.

WIDNER. This is no time for asinine quips.

JAY. Oh isn't it?

FLEXNER. (*Comes to L. of JAY*) Let me tell you something that will spoil some of your pep Mrs. Weems has secured a court order to have you examined by a strickly neutral physician!

JAY. No!

FLEXNER. Claiming she has evidence that you're as sound as a dollar.

JAY. No!

WIDNER. And since we can't refuse to have you examined we have got to make you something worth examining.

JAY. Make me something worth examining?
(*Crosses to R. of WIDNER*) What do you mean?

FLEXNER. Make you a patient, that's what.
(*Taps JAY on shoulder*)

JAY. Do you mean, *make* me sick! (*Crosses R. of WIDNER*)

WIDNER. Yes.

JAY. Not on your life.

WIDNER. You don't think you can get by like that, do you? There's nothing else for it.

JAY. I tell you flat I won't.

WIDNER. Don't you know that we will all be guilty, it's perjury, it's conspiracy, it's all our reputations! (*WIDNER grows apoplectic and unable to speak further subsides in chair R. of table*)

FLEXNER. Yes and your freedom too——

JAY. Say—*count me out!* I didn't bargain for this. (*Crosses to R. C.*)

FLEXNER. Don't forget where your guardian stands in all this, it will be the worse for him.

JAY. (*R. of FLEXNER*) By jove so it will!

FLEXNER. It's absolutely imperative that you be genuinely ill——

JAY. Can't I just pretend to faint?

FLEXNER. This is no time for anything but facts. (*Passes JAY to L. of him and WIDNER forces him to chair R. of table*) How about his heart? (*Crosses to back of table*)

WIDNER. (*Sounds wrong side. Listening R., then thumps. FLEXNER moves WIDNER's hand to L. side.*)

FLEXNER. Heart—over this side. He's got a heart like a bull.

WIDNER. Oh, pardon me, my mistake. (*R. of JAY*)

JAY. He knows where it is.

(*FLEXNER pours a spoonful of medicine.*)

FLEXNER. Give him this right now. (*Hands WIDNER spoonful of medicine*)

JAY. I'll be hanged if I will.

WIDNER. Come, come, be a man. (*As JAY expostulates, WIDNER puts the dose in JAY's mouth*)

JAY. Woo—that's bitter! Give me some water (*FLEXNER goes up L. for water, turning, sees JAY has drunk the dosed water—JAY grabs the dosed glass of water which he gulps greedily*) Woof—what a relief! What a relief!

FLEXNER. (*Rubbing his hands*) You will find it so—to-morrow—(*Come L. of table*)

JAY. (*Rising*) What—you dosed that——

WIDNER. Only a little, pardonable camouflage.

FLEXNER. (*Hands JAY pills*) Come on now, take these, they won't hurt you.

(*JAY takes pills in hand and throws them away as he crosses to R. C.*)

WIDNER. (*To L. of JAY*) And these powders

every two hours during the night.

JAY. (*Takes powder box*) Suppose I'm asleep?

WIDNER. You won't sleep. (*Crosses to L. c.*)

FLEXNER. (*Crosses to upside of bed*) I think the necessity of quick action suggests a double dose of this.

JAY. (*Gets on bed and takes fencing mask from chair—above bed*) I will not—oh—(*Puts on fencing mask*) Why didn't I think of that before. Nothing doing. I'm muzzled.

FLEXNER. Don't be silly—in a serious situation like this. Widner hold him while I give him this.

JAY. Safety first! (*He bounds out of bed and dashes into bathroom, slamming the door.* WIDNER starts after him carrying surgical forceps but is interrupted by CHALMERS' entrance L. CHALMERS glances quickly around the room and motions the Doctors)

CHALMERS. (*Crossing to up c.*) Oh, doctors, she's going——

WIDNER. (*At head of bed*) Without any fuss?

CHALMERS. Miss Durant is the spy, she's been giving information to Mrs. Weems and I fired her.

FLEXNER. (*R. of CHALMERS*) Did you tell her anything?

CHALMERS. Of course not. It isn't necessary

(WIDNER crosses to foot of bed—Enter MISS DURANT.)

MISS DURANT. (*Comes down L. of table*) Dr. Widner, may I speak to you?

CHALMERS. Miss Durant——

MISS DURANT. Dr. Widner—(*She sees JAY is not in the room and advances firmly*) Mr. Chalmers tells me that my services are no longer desired,

but as you, Dr. Widner, retained me—I can't of course recognize Mr. Chalmers' authority.

WIDNER. Oh, dear—I felt it——

FLEXNER. Mr. Chalmers is quite correct. We have decided to release you from the case.

MISS DURANT. Oh, I'm sorry if I haven't given satisfaction.

CHALMERS. (*Crosses to door—opens it*) Kindly leave at once—(*He throws open the door as JAY opens bathroom door and overhears the last*)

JAY. (*Crosses to R. of window*) What's that? Chalmers, what are you saying?

MISS DURANT. Good-bye, Mr. Jay. I am leaving the case.

JAY. Leaving the case! *Who* says you're leaving the case?

FLEXNER. (*A step to R.*) We—have decided—

JAY. And I decide that she shan't—oh, nurse—*it isn't* anything that I've done, is it? Have I offended you?

MISS DURANT. (*Crosses to C. to L. of JAY*) No, no, you haven't, you couldn't.

WIDNER. Oh, Lord, I knew it. I felt it! (*Crosses to L. of table and sits*)

CHALMERS. (*Above table*) Miss Durant, will you kindly not linger? This is most unprofessional.

MISS DURANT. What is unprofessional?

CHALMERS. Your coming back when you have been discharged. (*Comes down L.*)

JAY. Don't you dare to talk to her like that.

MISS DURANT. I couldn't leave Mr. Jay without one word of thanks for all his kindness and courtesy. I'm sure if there has been unprofessional conduct, Mr. Chalmers, it is not mine!

JAY. There's something here I don't understand. What's the answer?

CHALMERS. (*Crosses to JAY*) The doctors have decided——

JAY. (*Brushes him aside as he crosses to R. of DURANT*) I'm asking her, not you. Nursey, tell me——

MISS DURANT. I'm sorry, Mr. Jay, but I'm told to go and I *must*—go.

JAY. (*Holding DURANT's arm*) Very well then if you go, I'll go with you right out just as I am.

FLEXNER. Oh!

MISS DURANT. Please, Mr. Jay.

JAY. (*To CHALMERS*) Chalmers, the truth—come across with it.

CHALMERS. (*At foot of bed*) Well, if you will have it—somebody in this house is a traitor. Selling us out.

MISS DURANT. Mr. Chalmers!

JAY. Are you accusing Miss Durant of being a spy?

CHALMERS. I don't accuse anybody, but *she leaves*.

MISS DURANT. Mr. Jay—I couldn't and wouldn't do anything to hurt you in *any* way, I hope you know that.

JAY. I do. (*To CHALMERS*) Don't you dare mix her up in this—this is *my* affair—leave her out of it.

CHALMERS. It's our affair—Flexner's, Widner's——

WIDNER. (*Alarmed*) Don't bring me into it. (*Crosses up to L. of FLEXNER, back of table*)

CHALMERS. Yes, mine and others, too!

JAY. Oh, it is You think she's a *spy*, do you? Now I'm going to show you the kind of confidence I've placed in Miss Durant. Nursey, here's the story. I'm perfectly well. I'm shamming sick with

the help of that lawyer and those doctors because I don't want to give evidence in a divorce case. The whole thing is a fraud, a conspiracy. Now there's the truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God.

MISS DURANT. (*Taking JAY'S R. hand*) Mr. Jay! (*A pause—while she looks at him*) I appreciate your trusting me, like this. (*She turns pleadingly to the doctors. Crosses to R. of table*) I—Oh,—please, let me stay on the case, and I'll do everything I can to help you.

JAY. (*A step to DURANT—Takes DURANT'S hand*) You will? Nursey, you're a—you're a brick. (*Enter SAJI, R.—Crosses to table at bed and looks at chart, picks it up.—JAY, furiously to CHALMERS*) Now you'll apologize to Miss Durant—all of you!

CHALMERS. Apologize? I will not. (*Crosses down L.*)

JAY. (*Moving to R.—sharply to SAJI*)—Saji! What are you doing there?

SAJI. Me? I look your sick chart, Mista Jay. I gotta telephone Misses Weems. (*Crosses to C.*)

ALL Mrs. Weems!

SAJI. Sure. She come first day you get sick, Mista Jay. Nurse-girl tell her, walk right out, quick! If she wants know how Mista Jay is—me let her know on telephone. Misses Weems she give me ten dolla. I let her know evely day on telephone. (*Crosses front of table and exits—carrying chart*)

JAY. (*Falls on bed—WIDNER sits R. of table—FLEXNER back of table*) Good God!

(*WIDNER walks around in a small circle, C.—then sits R. of table—head in hands.*)

ALL. Oh!

MISS DURANT. Good gracious!

CHALMERS. (*L. of table*) Miss Durant, I apologize.

MISS DURANT. It was all my fault. I thought she was some relative. I didn't know. Oh, I hope it hasn't ruined everything. (*Crosses to foot of bed*) Is she—is she—the case?

JAY. (*Crawls to foot of bed*) If you don't protect me from that sentimental vampire—she'll marry me. (*Sits bed*)

MISS DURANT. (*Suddenly aware of a new interest in JAY*) Marry you! (*She looks puzzled at the others*) I don't understand.

JAY. Divorce——

MISS DURANT. Divorce!

CHALMERS. Yes, she wants to be rid of her husband.

MISS DURANT. Oh, indeed!

(*FLEXNER crosses to R. of table, above WIDNER.*)

JAY. So those quacks filled me full of dope to make me sick enough for Dr. Macklyn's examination to-morrow—?

MISS DURANT. (C.) Dr. Macklyn—Dr. Robert Macklyn?

CHALMERS. (*Sadly*) Yes.

JAY. (*Jealously*) Do you know him?

MISS DURANT. Oh, very well.

JAY. Eh!

MISS DURANT. We—I mean—I've nursed for him——

JAY. Oh, you've nursed for him—(*Relieved*)

MISS DURANT. But wh—y—why are you calling *him* in? (*To WIDNER—Crossing a step to table*)

WIDNER. (*Sits R. of table*) Calling him in?
Oh, my God!

FLEXNER. Unfortunately—he isn't *called* in—he's *brought* in. (*Crosses to back of bed*)

CHALMERS. (*To Nurse*) Understand?

FLEXNER. And he comes to-morrow at three.

CHALMERS. Dr. Macklyn's been in love with Mrs. Weems for years.

MISS DURANT. (c.) Yes, I know. I've heard all that.

JAY. Oh, nurse, I'm going to be so ill.

MISS DURANT. (*Looking at JAY, then crosses to WIDNER, anxiously*) Oh—what *have* you done to him?

WIDNER. (*Meaningly*) Everything.

MISS DURANT. (*To FLEXNER*) And you say that Dr. Macklyn is coming to-morrow at three?

CHALMERS. (*Moves up L.*) Yes.

FLEXNER. And he will diagnose a very sick man.

(*Enter SAJI upside of bed.*)

SAJI. (*Crosses to C. L. of DURANT*) Excuse, please—a gentleman to see Mr. Jay.

(*MISS DURANT takes card, glances at it.*)

MISS DURANT. Oh—oh!

JAY. Nurse—nurse—what's happened?

(*MISS DURANT in high excitement.*)

MISS DURANT. They've sprung him to-day instead of to-morrow.

ALL. Who?

MISS DURANT. Dr. Macklyn! He's here now.

JAY. What!

CHALMERS. No!

FLEXNER. It's impossible!

WIDNER. We're ruined!

MISS DURANT. (*Crossing quickly to JAY*) They notified us he was coming to-morrow, so they could fool us to-day.

JAY. Oh, nurse, what'll we do——

CHALMERS. I'll be disbarred. (*Crosses up and down L. agitated*)

WIDNER. (*Rises—crosses to foot of bed*) There's nothing else for it, he's got to frame a blank!

FLEXNER. (*Moves to upside foot of bed*) That's it—amnesia—loss of identity.

(CHALMERS crosses to door.)

WIDNER. (*Apoplectic with excitement*) Delusions, hallucinations. Come—come—we've got to go through with it—be brave. Don't get excited, Flexner—(*Becomes speechless with excitement—grows red in face and is about to collapse. FLEXNER comes L. of him, loosens his collar, and ruffles his hair—DURANT R. of him, supporting him*)

CHALMERS. Sh! Here he comes—(*Crosses to C.—MISS DURANT crosses down R. quickly—FLEXNER supporting WIDNER who is utterly collapsed, and dishevelled, collar undone and hair on end—At upside foot of bed WIDNER R. of FLEXNER—Door opens admitting DR. MACKLYN, CONSTANCE and POLICEMAN.—DR. MACKLYN advances slowly and seriously to C.*)

MACKLYN. (*Crosses to R. of table, puts case down and starts to take off gloves*) Gentlemen. (*Bows gravely*)

MISS DURANT. Good morning, Dr. Macklyn.

DR. MACKLYN. (*R. of table*) Ah, Miss Durant, I see the patient is in competent hands.

MISS DURANT. Thank you, Dr. Macklyn.

CONSTANCE. (*L. of table*) Now we'll see if he really is ill or not.

DR. MACKLYN. Mrs. Weems, I shall have to ask you to wait in the other room.

CONSTANCE. Oh, very well. (*Exit*)

MACKLYN. (*Turns to the OFFICER*) Officer, it will not be necessary for you to remain in the room. If it is necessary to make the arrest—(*All register*) I will notify you.

POLICEMAN. (*Touching his hat*) Yes, sir.

MACKLYN. You may wait outside the door.

POLICEMAN. Yes, sir. (*Exits*)

CHALMERS. (*Crosses to L. of table—recovering himself after an anxious glance at the policeman*) Oh, Dr. Macklyn, may I introduce myself? Chalmers, Mr. Weems' attorney.

MACKLYN. (*Haughtily*) Mr. Chalmers.

CHALMERS. (*Indicating WIDNER and FLEXNER*) These gentlemen I think you know, Dr. Flexner and Dr. Widner.

(*FLEXNER and WIDNER come forward a step side by side—extending hands.*)

MACKLYN. (*With scorn for the small—ignoring them*) Have not had that privilege. (*Gravely—WIDNER and FLEXNER bow expressly to MACKLYN's stiff nod—and scared, slowly back to former positions*)

WIDNER. We are honored. (*Both back together to former position and shakes hands with each other*)

CHALMERS. I understand you have been appointed by the Court. Nevertheless, I must protest.

MACKLYN. I am sorry to intrude, but I have no alternative. My authority—(*Produces document*)

CHALMERS. (*To MACKLYN*) But I want it to go on record—Mr. Jay is too ill.

MACKLYN. (*Looks at WIDNER and FLEXNER*) I am the best judge of that. Mr. Chalmers, I must ask you to retire.

CHALMERS. Certainly—(*Exit*)

MACKLYN. Dr. Flexner, will you close the door?

(*FLEXNER starts to go L.—WIDNER holds on to coat-tail. FLEXNER sharply disengages his grasp—Crosses to D. and exit*)

MACKLYN. Now, I—(*Turns and sees WIDNER shaking with fright and smiling a sickly grin at him*) Where may I wash my hands?

WIDNER. This way, please. Hot or cold? (*Hardly able to speak—crossing down R.*)

MACKLYN. (*Crossing to bathroom R.*) Will you get the patient ready, Nurse?

MISS DURANT. Yes, doctor. (*Puts chair c.—MACKLYN and WIDNER exit down R.*) Come, Mr. Jay—(*JAY gets out of bed—DURANT crosses to him and helps*) Sit there—

JAY. (*Sitting in chair c.*) Stand close to me, Nurse, stand close to me.

MISS DURANT. (*R. of JAY—spreads bed cover over JAY's knees*) Sh, sh!

JAY. (*Grasping her hands*) Say, let me hold your hands.

MISS DURANT. No, I'm going to need them.

JAY. May I have a glass of water? (*DURANT crosses to table R.—gets water-pitcher and glass, crosses to JAY and hands him water*)

MISS DURANT. (*To JAY, as JAY drinks*) When

I pinch you, look at me.

JAY. You don't have to pinch me to make me look at you.

MISS DURANT. Remember, and follow my lead.

JAY. I'd follow you to the end of the world.
(MISS DURANT *crosses back of JAY to table L. C. and places pitcher and glass on it*) Oh, nurse, whenever you look at me, my heart jumps a mile.

MISS DURANT. (*Crossing back to R. of JAY*) Honest?

(*Enter MACKLYN and WIDNER from R. I.*)

MACKLYN. Is the patient ready, Miss Durant?

MISS DURANT. Yes, doctor.

(MACKLYN *crosses to L. C. followed close by WIDNER who collides with MACKLYN when he stops, the edges to L. and collapses into arm-chair down L.*)

MACKLYN. How long have you been on the case?

MISS DURANT. From the beginning. About a week.

MACKLYN. Is there a night nurse?

(JAY *groans*)

MISS DURANT. Yes, Miss Hepworth, Presbyterian Hospital. Would you like to see the charts?

MACKLYN. (*R. of table*) No, I shall use my own judgment. (*Looks critically and disapprovingly at JAY*) H'm!

FLEXNER. (*Coming down R. of MACKLYN*) As I explained, Dr. Macklyn, the hysterical features of the case are marked—(*Taps JAY's knee which*

causes JAY to kick) His reactions are of a spasmodic nature. His delusions produce digressive motor phenomena. (*Backs up back of table*)

MACKLYN. (*Paying no attention, moves to L. of JAY*) Body seems well-nourished—a trifle flabby perhaps.

WIDNER. (*L. of table—gasping*) Defective vision, expansion and contraction of the retina—the cynus congested.

MACKLYN. That may have various causes. I observe a certain assymetry of cranial formation common in defectives—heart action?

WIDNER. (*Panting*) Like a bull—(*Angry look from FLEXNER—Hastily*) Oh, er—sinking spells at irregular intervals.

MACKLYN. *Hm!* Thyroid secretion, perhaps—sometimes responsible for ego-mania—Appetite?

MISS DURANT. None—we cannot induce him to eat. (*Points to tray. MACKLYN peers at tray*)

MACKLYN. Bad teeth, probably—what stimulants? He looks to me like a man who has continually over-stimulated. I will take the patient's temperature.

(*WIDNER rises and goes up to L. of FLEXNER and nudges him. FLEXNER offers his thermometer that registers 104 degrees.*)

FLEXNER. Permit me, may I offer you my thermometer? (*Back of table*)

MACKLYN. (*Looks at him and takes his own from pocket*) Thank you, I always use my own.

(*FLEXNER and WIDNER register dismay. DURANT crosses to tray and gets tobasco. DURANT gently crosses to R. of JAY carrying tobasco behind her. MACKLYN, with back to JAY, pre-*

paring thermometer—JAY has been watching, fascinated by fright—MISS DURANT sidles along, pinches JAY—JAY turn and opens his mouth. She deluges him with tobasco, with one wild shriek of pain, doctors look on astonished. FLEXNER crosses behind JAY. DURANT R. of JAY, trying to pacify him. WIDNER leans against FLEXNER for support. FLEXNER trying to hold JAY still)

MACKLYN. Curious, very curious.

WIDNER. One of his spasms. Not quite as violent as usual, very—(*Panting*) difficult to control.

(They hang over JAY who gasps and inarticulately tries to talk.)

MACKLYN. (*Very calm as one used to such cases*) Sounds like delirium. Can you hold him while I take his temperature?

MISS DURANT. (*With hypnotic gentleness*) Mr. Jay, you must be quiet in order to enable Dr. Macklyn to take your temperature.

MACKLYN. Do these attacks occur often?

WIDNER. Very frequent—periodical, oh. (*Nearly expires*)

FLEXNER. He's quieter now. (*Crosses to back of table, WIDNER to L. of it*)

(MACKLYN inserts the thermometer in JAY's mouth and opens his watch-case to note time. All are giving up hope. MISS DURANT takes ice bowl from tray, picks up piece of ice, pinches JAY, who again obediently turns his head and opens mouth. She pops the piece of ice into JAY's mouth and replaces thermometer. He with cheeks bulging looks at her, while she cauti-

ously removes ice bowl out of sight, under bed. MACKLYN takes thermometer out of JAY'S mouth and looks at it. Starts. FLEXNER and WIDNER hang to each other hopelessly.)

MACKLYN. Why, it can't be. It's impossible. The patient has no temperature. He ought to be dead. (*Crosses to L. DOCTORS exchange wondering looks*)

FLEXNER. Exceptional case, very — unprecedented. (*WIDNER and FLEXNER register amazement. MACKLYN takes JAY'S hand, feels his head*)

MACKLYN. Dear me, dear me, I must test the heart. (*Turns to his bag*) My stethoscope. A chair Dr. (*MACKLYN opens bag, takes out a stethoscope. WIDNER throws up his hands helplessly. FLEXNER moves a chair to L. of JAY. Then moves to front of chair L. of table and nearly expires. FLEXNER grabs hold of WIDNER. MACKLYN settles the stethoscope, attaches the ear pieces and leans over JAY, looking down. His head nods as he counts the steady, even beats of JAY'S heart with finger—MISS DURANT takes JAY'S chin in her hands and lifts his face, and kisses him full on the mouth. JAY'S face is a study of emotion. His heart has jumped wildly. MACKLYN'S eyes widen with horror, he cannot believe his ears, and his finger counts furiously the quick beats. His face shows serious alarm, rises quickly as he takes down and folds the stethoscope*)

MACKLYN. (*Rises, alarmed and facing front*) My God, what a heart! (*Bus.*)

(*WIDNER expires, flops back against FLEXNER, who falls back into chair L. of table, with WIDNER on his knees.*)

Curtain.

ACT III

SCENE: MISS DURANT *alone. Fixing bed, Crosses down R., rings bell, goes to foot of bed picks up ice bowl, puts it on table up R. SAJI enters cautiously, stands holding door.*)

SAJI. You ring?

MISS DURANT. (*Up R. c.*) Saji, go tell Mr. Jay to hurry.

SAJI. Yes, missie. (*Crosses to R. c.*)

MISS DURANT. Tell me, Saji, when you came through what were the Doctors saying? What were they doing?

SAJI. Oh they talk, talk, talk, awful! All talk! Nobody know what they talk about. All same Bolshevicki. (*Crosses to down R.*)

MISS DURANT. (*A step to down c.*) Oh dear, I'm so afraid.

SAJI. Me too. I awful sick!

MISS DURANT. What's the matter with you?

SAJI. Nervous population. (*Exits*)

(*Enter JAY from dressing-room R. MISS DURANT crosses to door L. and listens.*)

JAY. (*Crosses to c.*) Nurse come here—
(*She crosses to him*) Please pinch me again.

MISS DURANT. (*Crosses to L. of JAY*) Sssh—don't be silly!

JAY. (*Tries to hold her*) Oh don't pull away from me.

MISS DURANT. (*Looking to L.*) Oh dear, what—are the doctors saying there?

JAY. I don't care what the doctors are saying—I don't care if I'm dying—you kissed me!

MISS DURANT. I? What! Oh, Mr. Jay!

JAY. You don't deny it?

DURANT. Oh dear now you have got an hallucination. Doctor Macklyn will be furious if he finds out I've tricked him.

JAY. Oh but it was such a beautiful trick. Talk about your magic!

MISS DURANT. You'd better not talk—we're not out of the woods yet.

JAY. But I want to be in the woods, a jug of wine, a loaf and thou beside me! Kissing in the wilderness.

DURANT. You mean singing in the wilderness—

JAY. Well, you can do the singing and I'll do the kissing. Don't you know, my darling nurse, that I love you, I love you, I love you——

MISS DURANT. Now isn't it too bad! You were getting on so nicely. And now you're delirious.

JAY. Delirious! Deliriously happy! (*She turns her head and looks at him*) No wonder my old heart jumped when you kissed me.

MISS DURANT. (*Door L. starts to open*) Sh—sh—someone's coming!

(*Enter MACKLYN L.*)

MACKLYN. (*Goes down L.*) Miss Durant, will you kindly assist Dr. Flexner. Dr. Widner has fainted.

MISS DURANT. (*Obedient, but terrified to leave JAY alone with MACKLYN*) Yes, yes, doctor, but—(*Hesitates*)

MACKLYN. Quickly, please—(*Crosses to front of table L. C.*) I wish to further question the patient.

MISS DURANT. Yes, doctor. (*Crosses to door*)

MACKLYN. Oh, Miss Durant—tell Dr. Flexner we will continue the consultation here when Mr.

Widner comes to. (*Turns to JAY. Behind MACKLYN'S back MISS DURANT shakes a warning finger at JAY and exits. MACKLYN advances to JAY, who looks at him resentfully. He sees JAY'S expression, turns to MISS DURANT who quickly tries to cover up her signs to JAY*)

MISS DURANT. Yes, doctor. (*Exits*)

JAY. (*At end of bed*) Look here. I haven't come too, either.

MACKLYN. (*Crosses to c.*) It is necessary to learn the cause of your palpitation.

JAY. The cause? Of my palpitation? Why, I just palp.

MACKLYN. May I ask what sensations lead up to it?

JAY. Sensations! That would be telling.

MACKLYN. But I want you to tell me.

JAY. They're perfectly indescribable.

MACKLYN. Please be explicit.

JAY. Well, after that I became unconscious.

MACKLYN. That fit! How did you feel before you became violent?

JAY. Oh, awful! Intense, burning, stinging—pain—Phew, I can taste it yet!

MACKLYN. (*Turning sharply*) You tasted the fit?

JAY. I did, I tasted it all over.

MACKLYN. And your lack of temperature, what caused that?

JAY. Cold. Exceedingly ice cold cold.

MACKLYN. This is no time for flippancy.

JAY. I won't be badgered like this. My nurse says I've had an hallucination and that's all there is to it.

MACKLYN. Your nurse says you've had an hallucination, eh? Of what nature?

JAY. A blonde hallucination, in heavenly blue.

MACKLYN. Good God! (MACKLYN *has been standing near table L. c. He picks up the bottle marked Cannabis Indica. Starts, looks sharply at JAY*) What's this? (*Crosses to table L. c. picking up the bottle*) Indian hemp, hey? A very singular prescription. The nurse may be right about your hallucination.

(*Enter MISS DURANT L.*)

MISS DURANT. Dr. Macklyn, Dr. Widner has partially revived.

MACKLYN. Good! Let him come in. (*Crosses up c. with bottle in hand*)

MISS DURANT. (*Going to door and speaking through*) Dr. Flexner, will you bring Dr. Widner?

MACKLYN. Miss Durant, kindly accompany Mr. Jay to his dressing-room. He cannot be present while his case is under discussion.

(*MISS DURANT crosses to L. of JAY.*)

JAY. I won't be ordered out. If this is my autopsy, I'm going to attend it.

MACKLYN. Then I wash my hands of any shock that may result.

JAY. Wash whatever you like, but I sit here. (*Sits foot of bed*)

MISS DURANT. No, no, you mustn't! Come, Mr. Jay!

MACKLYN. Miss Durant will assist you—kindly go.

MISS DURANT. Please, Mr. Jay. (*Urging him*)

JAY. Oh, very well, if Miss Durant will assist me—(*He rises and they cross to the dressing-room door*) Now don't you pinch me again, Nursey, un-

less you *mean* it. (*They exit dressing-room—Enter WIDNER and FLEXNER*)

MACKLYN. And now, gentlemen, I find this bottle of Hashsheech on Mr. Jay's table—(*Holding up bottle. Crosses to c.*) What is the meaning of this?

WIDNER. Oh, why did I ever get into this? (*Sits chair R. o table. FLEXNER to back of table, WIDNER to chair R. of table, sits*)

MACKLYN. What about this? Answer me.

FLEXNER. (*c. to L. of MACKLYN*) That? I never saw it before. It is doubtless some drug Mr. Jay is in the habit of taking——

MACKLYN. Nonsense!

WIDNER. Oh, that! It's mine——

MACKLYN. Yours? Then that accounts for your hallucination——

WIDNER. What hallucination?

MACKLYN. Thinking that you are a doctor—(*MACKLYN crosses to back of table and puts bottle down c.*) Dr. Flexner, are you familiar with Mr. Jay's general condition? You are his regular physician, I presume?

FLEXNER. I never attended him before.

MACKLYN. And you, Dr. Widner—?

WIDNER. He's new to me.

MACKLYN. (*To c.*) Indeed! Then what made you take the case?

WIDNER. Five Thousand Dollars.

MACKLYN. (*Turns to WIDNER, sharply*) Five Thousand Dollars?

FLEXNER. (*Covering the break—Rises, touches WIDNER's head and seeing MACKLYN's gaze turned away pushes WIDNER's head to wake him up to his slip*) He is still er—light-headed—from his faint. It was an emergency call, Dr. Macklyn.

MACKLYN. *Who* called you in, Dr. Widner?

FLEXNER. Mr. Chalmers was with him when he was stricken——

MACKLYN. How was he stricken?

FLEXNER. Um—the same thing, only different.
(Sits)

MACKLYN. That's very clear. And what did you give him?

WIDNER. Nervous prostration.

(FLEXNER *kicks* WIDNER *under the table*.)

MACKLYN. (*Turning quickly on* WIDNER) You prescribed—what?

FLEXNER. He means—(*Half rising*)—we prescribed *for* nervous prostration *and* fits.

MACKLYN. Well? And what did *you* give him, Dr. Flexner?

FLEXNER. I gave him a sedative. Dr. Widner prescribed for the fit. Dr. Widner is a specialist on fits, he has fits himself.

MACKLYN. (*Moving to R. c.*) I can readily understand that. Do these attacks occur frequently?

FLEXNER. Before and after meals.

WIDNER. Excuse me, *after* and before meals.

MACKLYN. (*Pacing up c.*) Are they always so exhausting?

FLEXNER. Very. That's what throws him into the low. The carburetor needs adjusting. The spark plug——

MACKLYN. (*Coming down c.*) Dr. Flexner, this is a consultation, not a garage.

WIDNER. Wake up, it's *you* who's light-headed!

FLEXNER. Pardon me—(*Rises*) a slight confusion as to terms—but the diagnosis stands.

MACKLYN. (*To R. c.*) But his heart, gentlemen, his heart—it beat perfectly, was normal, steady, full—then wild, fluttering, leaping, my God, how it

leaped! I wish I had him in a hospital, I'd operate!

WIDNER and FLEXNER. Operate? (FLEXNER sits)

MACKLYN. I mean, place him under observation. (Crosses to R. C.) A most unaccountable heart!

CONSTANCE. (*Rushing in, from the sitting room*) Unaccountable heart! I'll account for his heart. (Crosses to C. to DR. MACKLYN) I've got to see you alone, and I'll account for his heart!

WIDNER. (*Half rising, CONSTANCE turns on WIDNER and he sits again*) Be calm, dear lady!

FLEXNER. Mrs. Weems, this is a consultation. (Back of table to L. of CONSTANCE)

CONSTANCE. (C.) I don't care if it is, you're a fool! You're all fools! Send those idiots away—you're my doctor, Bobby. (Crosses to down R. C. to L. of MACKLYN) I brought you into this! If you don't send them out, I'll scream!

WIDNER. (*Rises, crosses to C.*) Before screaming——

CONSTANCE. (*Moving again angrily to WIDNER*) Oh, take that kewpie out of here before I step on him.

WIDNER. Dear, dear, dear, dear! (*Retreats to L. and exits with FLEXNER*)

CONSTANCE. (*Crosses to front of bed to R.*) Now, where is she? That horrid, hateful, thing! I wish I'd run in and scratched her eyes out right then, I do!

MACKLYN. (R. C. to L. of CONSTANCE) Be calm, be calm, what is all this?

CONSTANCE. (*At R. of MACKLYN*) I ran downstairs, to telephone my lawyers—and I couldn't get them and I ran all the way back.

MACKLYN. But why?

CONSTANCE. Never mind! Where is *she*?

MACKLYN. My dear girl, you are positively incoherent.

CONSTANCE. Why wouldn't I be incoherent and she kissing him?

MACKLYN. Come now, don't give away to nerves!

CONSTANCE. Nerves? Ha! She's got the *nerve*. Who is that nurse?

MACKLYN. What nurse?

CONSTANCE. That yellow-headed Easter chicken!

MACKLYN. You mean Miss Durant?

CONSTANCE. Yes, who is she?

MACKLYN. She used to be one of my specials. (*Crosses to C.*)

CONSTANCE. Does she kiss you too? (*Follows him to C.*)

MACKLYN. (*Turns*) What are you talking about?

CONSTANCE. (*C. R. of MACKLYN*) Talking? I saw her do it! I was standing outside that door! and I looked through *that* very keyhole, and I saw——

MACKLYN. You saw what?

CONSTANCE. You, listening to his heart—he sat right here—you using your stethoscope. And that nurse kissed him—right on the mouth. And he jumped—and you jumped and you said “My God, what a heart!”

MACKLYN. Oh! (*Crosses to L.*) You mean—while I was listening to his heart—she—kissed him? (*Crosses back to L. of CONSTANCE*)

CONSTANCE. She did—she did!

MACKLYN. Are you sure?

CONSTANCE. Positive!

MACKLYN. So, *that's* what gave him palpitation! (*A step to L.*)

CONSTANCE. Discharge that nurse! Wretched,

little blondine trickster! Are you going to allow it? (*Moves towards door R.*)

MACKLYN. Certainly not! They can't make game of me like that! (*Crosses up C.*)

CONSTANCE. Then what are you waiting for? Go right in and discharge her.

MACKLYN. (*Turning on CONSTANCE. Crosses to end of bed to L. of her*) But see here, Constance, suppose she *did* kiss him, what's that to *you*?

CONSTANCE. (*At foot of bed*) It's an insult to all womanhood, that's what it is!

MACKLYN. Then why do *you* resent it?

CONSTANCE. I mean—she's a trained nurse.

MACKLYN. Well, they're human, aren't they?

CONSTANCE. You call an exhibition like that human?

MACKLYN. Now Constance, what is he to you?

CONSTANCE. He's—he's my witness—and he's, shamming sick—to get kissed by a trained nurse, and *you* let her fool *you*—but *I* won't let *him* fool *me*—never!! (*Crosses to L. C.*)

MACKLYN. You won't let him fool you. What about?

CONSTANCE. *I'll* show her she can't come in and snatch him like that! *I'll* show her!

MACKLYN. You'll show her? (*Enter MISS DURANT and JAY R.*) Very well. Ah, Miss Durant, you're just in time. Now the quickest way to get to the bottom of this is to let me *hear* you show her. (*MISS DURANT to foot of bed. JAY R. of her. MACKLYN crosses—opens dressing room door—At sight of MISS DURANT, CONSTANCE flies into a passion*)

CONSTANCE. Very well. So! There you are! Just let me tell you, I saw you! Kissing Mr. Jay

—when he was perfectly helpless and couldn't defend himself!

(MISS DURANT gives terrified look at MACKLYN who watches them all grimly.)

MISS DURANT. Kissing Mr. Jay!

JAY. Constance, you're a pest! (*Crosses to R. of her*) I've ordered you out of this house a dozen times. If you think you're going to come back and make trouble for Miss Durant, I tell you right now I won't have it.

CONSTANCE. If she thinks she can win you over like that *I'll* show her *who* has a prior claim.

MISS DURANT. What do you mean, prior claim?

JAY. Now you leave her alone and *me* alone.

CONSTANCE. (*Crosses to R. of JAY*) I don't care, I won't have her coming between us. I won't!

JAY. Between us nothing! Can't a fellow even dare be polite to you, without all this silly nonsense?

CONSTANCE. Silly nonsense! So, that's what you call it! Now I *will* show her!

MACKLYN. Show her what?

CONSTANCE. I'll go and get the letters.

MACKLYN. My letters?

CONSTANCE. No, Mr. Jay's letters.

MACKLYN. (*Goes up c. relieved*) Oh, that's different!

(CONSTANCE crosses to door L. JAY crosses to L. of MISS DURANT.)

CONSTANCE. Wait till I get back with those letters and then. Bobby, you bounce her and bounce her hard! (*Exits slamming door*)

(MACKLYN comes down to L. of JAY, looking after CONSTANCE.)

MACKLYN. So there have been letters, eh?

JAY. (*Trying to square himself with MACKLYN*) Look here, Dr. Macklyn, that girl's beside herself. You can't believe a word she says.

MACKLYN. I have reason to believe *some* things she says.

JAY. No, you cannot believe *one* thing!

MACKLYN. (*Crossing as he speaks to sitting room door*) I've learned a number of things, but here's one for *you* to learn, Mr. Jay, you can't make game of Science and the Law, and get away with it! Even if you do qualify as a sick Romeo! You've elected to be sick, now you're going to go *through* with it and *all the way* through. (*Crosses to door and opens it*)

JAY. Oh nurse, nurse, save me!

MACKLYN. (*Opening door L.*) Gentlemen!

(*Enter WIDNER and FLEXNER. WIDNER comes down and catches sight of his face in mirror and is shocked at his appearance.*)

MACKLYN. It's all right, doctor, it's only your face.

(*WIDNER sits armchair L. FLEXNER to L. of table.*)

MISS DURANT. (*Following him*) Doctor, let me explain! Really, you're under a misapprehension.

MACKLYN. I'm under no misapprehension now. The patient cannot remain here. He will be removed to a hospital at once! Where he will be placed under my personal observation. And under the care of a competent doctor.

FLEXNER. Meaning—?

MACKLYN. Precisely, and a specially trained nurse.

DURANT. Oh!

JAY. I tell you flat I won't go. I'm a perfectly sound, healthy man, and I will not be separated from my nurse. (*Crosses to c.*)

MACKLYN. You *will* go and you're going now!

FLEXNER. I protest! I protest!

WIDNER. You're right, but I don't agree with you!

FLEXNER. I'll make a statement: this is nervous prostration. This excitement may kill him.

WIDNER. I hope so!

MACKLYN. May I use your phone.

JAY. What for?

MACKLYN. Call the ambulance. (*Goes up to phone up R.*)

ALL. The ambulance!

(WIDNER *rises and crosses up to side of FLEXNER.*)

MACKLYN. Certainly he goes to the hospital at once. Immediately!

MISS DURANT. (*Following up to L. of MACKLYN*) Before you give that call, Dr. Macklyn, let me have a word with you in private.

MACKLYN. There's no time now, Miss Durant.

MISS DURANT. But there must be time. Dr. Macklyn, as nurse in this case I insist on being heard.

MACKLYN. Very well.

MISS DURANT. (*A step to c.*) Gentlemen, will you excuse us, please? It is a professional matter.

FLEXNER. We are ordered around like a couple of flunkys. (*Exit FLEXNER and WIDNER*)

MISS DURANT. Mr. Jay, will you please leave us? (*Crosses to JAY at R.*)

(MACKLYN comes down c.)

JAY. I don't trust that man, he's too slick.

MISS DURANT. (*Urging him to go*) You can trust me, please go.

JAY. I'll trust you, and I'll go. But I'll return, and when I return—well, I'll return. (*Exits*)

MACKLYN. Now, Miss Durant.

MISS DURANT. (*Crosses to foot of bed*) Dr. Macklyn, when I've nursed for you, you've been good enough to commend me.

MACKLYN. Up till now, yes. But this time you've failed me. I granted you this interview, not because of anything you want to say to me, but for what I want to say to you.

MISS DURANT. But Doctor—!

MACKLYN. Not only did you betray a sacred trust but you exposed me personally to professional ridicule. And for this I could have you black-listed in every hospital, and nurses' register in the state.

MISS DURANT. But you wouldn't if you knew my reason.

MACKLYN. Your reasons have nothing to do with it. You were trusted and you failed.

MISS DURANT. But I haven't failed, in protecting my patient from the advantage you were taking of him; I also am protecting you.

MACKLYN. Protecting me?

MISS DURANT. Yes, you! Everyone knows that you were in love with Mrs. Weems and that you wrote a lot of foolish letters.

MACKLYN. We leave Mrs. Weems out of it.

MISS DURANT. We can't. She's the cause of

the whole unfortunate affair. In trying to get this divorce from her husband who adores her, she is using you as her tool.

MACKLYN. Me! Her tool!

MISS DURANT. Yes and spelt with an F.

MACKLYN. F double o—Oh, thank you, Miss Durant. (*A step to L.*)

MISS DURANT. Don't mention it, Dr. Macklyn. In shamming sickness Mr. Jay is trying his best to stop that silly child from further folly. And you are blocking it.

MACKLYN. Again you fail to convince me.

MISS DURANT. (*A step to R. of MACKLYN*) Then I'll try again. If you persist in forcing Mr. Jay to testify everyone will think you helped the divorce in order to marry Mr. Weems yourself.

MACKLYN. I never thought of that.

MISS DURANT. Therefore I'm protecting you.

MACKLYN. All very well for you, but what of me? When a man has been goaded beyond endurance—?

MISS DURANT. Ah, you admit you were goaded?

MACKLYN. I admit nothing.

MISS DURANT. Then don't go on with this persecution, don't send Mr. Jay away and don't take me off the case. Why, you see. Mrs. Weems wouldn't want to divorce her husband if she knew that Mr. Jay was—well—interested in someone else.

MACKLYN. Oh, I see! So that's the way the cat jumps!

MISS DURANT. But she hasn't jumped yet.

MACKLYN. She might though. If she gets the chance.

MISS DURANT. She won't if you help the mouse. Will you?

MACKLYN. A nurse, perhaps; but not a jay-

bird. *(Sternly)* No, Miss Durant—*(Pointing to JAY'S room. Crosses front of bed to R.)* That young scalawag got himself *into* this. Now let him get *out* of it as best he can.

MISS DURANT. *(At foot of bed)* Very well, Doctor. Then don't blame me if *the cat shows her claws!*

MACKLYN. You mean you'll fight me for him.

(Enter CONSTANCE.)

CONSTANCE. Oh Bobbie, they're gone, they're gone, they're gone! *(Crosses to L.)*

(Enter JAY R.)

JAY. *(Down R.)* Constance, what's the matter?

MACKLYN. What's gone? *(Crosses to C.)*

CONSTANCE. All your letters, they're stolen! Save me! Save me! My husband's got your letters! *(Crosses to JAY)*

JAY. I told you to burn them.

CONSTANCE. Oh, he'll kill me, he'll kill me. *(Clutches at JAY)*

MACKLYN. A cat and a mouse and now the bull dog! I'm going! *(Crosses to L.)*

(Enter SAJI L.—Crosses to R. of JAY.)

SAJI. Mister Jay! Mr. Jay! Mr. Weems, he come crazy! Kick door, kick me, my God! More better you go France!

(Noise off stage. WEEMS' voice as door quickly opens, WIDNER and FLEXNER enter hastily.)

WEEMS. (*Off stage*) Open that door!

WIDNER. He's a madman!

FLEXNER. (*To c.*) A lunatic! A lunatic!

JAY. Oh he's shamming!

WIDNER. He isn't shamming, believe me, he's real!

(FLEXNER *holds door L.* WEEMS' *voice off stage.*
CONSTANCE *crosses to c.*)

WEEMS. Open that door! Open that door!

(CONSTANCE *grabs nearest man to her who happens to be WIDNER to R. of her.*)

CONSTANCE. You save me!

(*Door bursts open, enter WEEMS, crosses down L. to front of table, holds position a moment.*)

WEEMS. Viper! Serpent! Worm! (*Crosses to c.*)

JAY. Serpent! Worm?

(CONSTANCE *to front of table R. of MACKLYN.*
WIDNER *creeps back of settee to L.*)

WEEMS. Worm that bites the hand that caresses it. (*Turns on CONSTANCE*) And you! Hypocrite! Double-dealer! Conniving Schemer!

CONSTANCE. Oh, he's calling me names! (*Throws arms around MACKLYN's neck*)

MACKLYN. No, not me. (*Releases himself from CONSTANCE*)

WEEMS. (*Turning to MACKLYN*) And you! What's the meaning of this, madame? A soiree for your lovers? A rendezvous for your parlor-snakes

—your boudoir chamelions—

(WIDNER and FLEXNER up L.)

MACKLYN. Boudoir camelions!

WEEMS. I have his letters—that lounge-lizard's letters—the originals, in your own handwriting—

JAY. Whose hand do you think I'd write them in?

CONSTANCE. (L. of WEEMS) You thief!

WEEMS. And now I'm through! I shall bring suit. And I shall name one of these vipers! (Pointing to JAY and MACKLYN)

CONSTANCE. No, no, no, you couldn't do that, you mustn't.

(WIDNER and FLEXNER come down L.)

WEEMS. We shall see to whom a divorce is granted—Do you see the crowded court-room—do you see the reporters in rows—do you hear the cold voice of my lawyer reading? "Meet me at Mr. Sherry's beauty parlor for tea." But you know, and doubtless—(Turns to MACKLYN)

MACKLYN. I do not. I don't drink tea. Damn it!

CONSTANCE. Johnny you wouldn't let them read those letters—in court, you couldn't be so unfair.

WEEMS. Unfair—Miss Durant, listen to this one!

CONSTANCE. No, no, no!

MACKLYN. Mr. Weems!

WEEMS. You'd better be quiet! I found some of your letters too. But I couldn't read your rotten writing!

MACKLYN. Thank God I'm a rotten writer.

CONSTANCE. I beg, I pray of you, don't! (Kneels at L. of WEEMS)

JAY. I swear there wasn't a thing in it. I was just trying to be nice to her, because she was sore that you neglected her so. I give you my word of honor.

WEEMS. *Your word of honor! You leper!*
(*Crosses to R. of table to L. of CONSTANCE*)

MISS DURANT. Mr. Weems how dare you! A finer, more honorable man than Mr. Jay never lived.

JAY. And I agree with her.

MISS DURANT. It was a perfectly innocent little flirtation, and you ought to be ashamed of yourself—Dr. Macklyn, isn't that true?

MACKLYN. A despicable exhibition of insane jealousy!

(WIDNER R. of FLEXNER.)

WEEMS. Oh, indeed!

MACKLYN. (*L. of table*) Yes, indeed!

JAY. I should say so! And after all I've suffered for you. At the hands of Dr. Mutt and Jeff.

FLEXNER. Mutt!

WIDNER. Jeff!

MACKLYN. Yes, and shame your poor little innocent wife, who was fool enough to marry you.

MISS DURANT. Your wife says you're a gentleman, but the way you're acting now, you're not even a man!

MACKLYN. That's right. He's not a man!

WEEMS. What do you mean?

FLEXNER. He's a mental degenerate.

WIDNER. A throw-back to a family of prehistoric apes.

MACKLYN. You're a roué and a reprobate! And not fit to live with any woman!

ALL. Yes! (*WEEMS sinks in chair R. of table*)

CONSTANCE. Stop it! (*Rises*) How dare you talk to him like that! What do you mean by saying he's not fit to live with!

MACKLYN. Why, he's a——

CONSTANCE. Don't you dare abuse him any more.

JAY. But you wanted me to help you to divorce him.

CONSTANCE. Divorce! Do you think I'd divorce my big, splendid, beautiful husband?—for a little snip like you?

JAY. Can you beat it!

MACKLYN. I'll never diagnose another woman so help me God!

CONSTANCE. I never wanted to go through with my divorce. Never, never! It was just to discipline you. Oh, Johnny, how you could you think it of your dear, little wife, who adores you? Oh! (*Feigns a sob, falls on WEEMS' neck*)

WEEMS. Oh, I'm weak!

JAY. You were a week in Spain.

WEEMS. Why you! I'll brain you! (*Rushes at*

JAY)

MISS DURANT. (*Intercepts him*) Mr. Weems!

(CONSTANCE *grabs WEEMS' L. arm.* *All three go up stage.* WEEMS C., DURANT R. of him, and CONSTANCE L. of WEEMS. MACKLYN to L. C.)

WEEMS. Let me get at him! (*WEEMS turns and hugs MISS DURANT*) My darling! CONSTANCE and DURANT *scream.* *He turns to CONSTANCE*) Pardon me, Miss Durant, my mistake! (*Hugs CONSTANCE*) My darling! (*Takes CONSTANCE to door L.*) Constance, my darling, go to the motor, and wait for me. I've just one more word to say to this person.

JAY. Person?

MACKLYN. (*To JAY*) He means you. (*Kiss. Exit CONSTANCE*)

WEEMS. (*At door L. Turns and winks at JAY*) Didn't mean a word of it. I never read more innocent letters than yours Reggie. Thanks to you we're reconciled. Damn fine woman my wife, damn fine. Ha, ha. (*Exits*)

JAY. Oh Lord! I'm dizzy.

WEEMS. (*Sits chair down L.*) Dizzy, I'm fainting again!

JAY. Oh, you, I forgot about you two veterinary surgeons. But now it's all off. There isn't any more divorce suit, no more dope, no more anything. And out you go.

MACKLYN. (*Comes to C.* I'm still an authority here. If you please the pleasure is mine.

(WIDNER *risés indignant.*)

WIDNER. But—but—but——

FLEXNER. Hush, you sound like a motor boat.

JAY. All right the pleasure is yours.

(WIDNER *sits again.*)

MACKLYN. (*Crosses to R. of table*) Gentlemen, you are dismissed from the case.

FLEXNER. Dr. Macklyn, you are exceeding your authority.

MACKLYN. Dr. Flexner, you are exhausting my patience.

WIDNER. (*Rises and crosses to L. of table*) Dr. Macklyn, we refuse to be bamboosled by you any longer. Sir, I warn you I'm roused. And when I'm roused I'm a riot. I shall report your conduct, sir!

(MACKLYN *R. of table.*)

FLEXNER. (*Urging WIDNER on*) Don't weaken.

WIDNER. All I can say to you, sir is—(WIDNER *chokes with indignation. Becomes red in the face*)

MACKLYN. That's enough. Take him out before he bursts. (FLEXNER *hustles WIDNER out. Exit FLEXNER and WIDNER*) And now, I shall discharge myself.

MISS DURANT. (*Crosses to C.*) But doctor, they

filled him full of medicine—what will I do?

MACKLYN. (*Stops and turns*) Give him a sedative and put him in a dark room!

JAY. (*At R. C.*) I don't want to be in a dark room!

MACKLYN. But your nurse will be with you.

JAY. Then make it as dark as you like.

MISS DURANT. But Dr. Macklyn, this is serious.

MACKLYN. All heart troubles are serious, but it happens to be a case where the services of his nurse are more valuable than those of a physician. As an emergency nurse, you have few if any equals and I bid you pair of idiots good morning. (*Crosses—Exit L.*)

JAY. (*A step to DURANT*) Georgina, dear, we're alone at last!

MISS DURANT. Come, I must take care of you. (*Goes up table to get medicine*)

JAY. (*Follows her—to L. of her*) No, you're through taking care of me, I'm going to take care of you. Won't you stop being my nurse, and be my wife? (*They sit on upside of bed*)

MISS DURANT. You dear boy! Don't you know that every wife is her husband's nurse?

JAY. And don't you know I love you? Isn't it time for another hallucination? (*They kiss with backs to audience*)

(*Enter DR. MACKLYN—crosses to table up L. C. to get his bag.*)

DR. MACKLYN. I beg your pardon, I forgot my— (*Sees their position. They are sitting on bed with backs to audience, MISS DURANT resting her head on JAY's shoulder—Picks up bag, smiles*) However, I beg your pardon. (*Exit L.*)

Curtain.

SICK-A-BED

Act: I

Hall Backing

Arm Ch.
Table

Bookshelves
Ch

Arm Ch.

Bedroom Bks

Box

Writing Table
Ch
Ch

Box

Bookshelves
Arm Ch.
Table
Ch
Box

Fireplace

Sofa

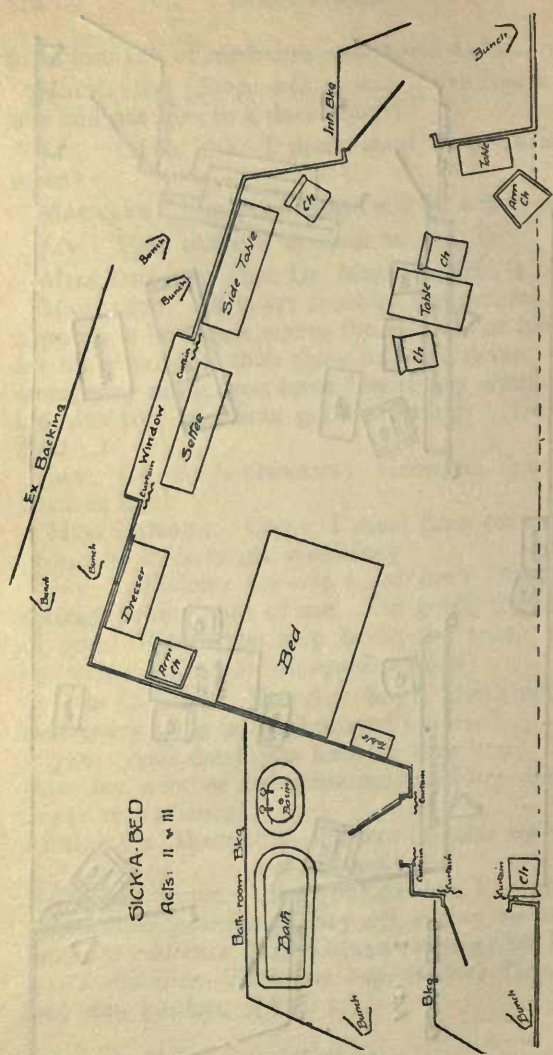
Hamper

Inferior Bks

Arm Ch.
Table

Table

SICK-A-BED Act's: II & III





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Is it possible to tell the absolute truth—even for twenty-four hours? It is—at least Bob Bennett, the hero of "Nothing but the Truth," accomplished the feat. The bet he made with his partners, his friends, and his fiancée—these are the incidents in William Collier's tremendous comedy hit. "Nothing but the Truth" can be whole-heartedly recommended as one of the most sprightly, amusing and popular comedies of which this country can boast. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) Price, 75 Cents.

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It is the tragedy of William Sylvanus Baxter that he has ceased to be sixteen and is not yet eighteen. Baby, child, boy, youth and grown-up are definite phenomena. The world knows them and has learned to put up with them. Seventeen is not an age, it is a disease. In its turbulent bosom the leavings of a boy are at war with the beginnings of a man.

In his heart, William Sylvanus Baxter knows all the tortures and delights of love; he is capable of any of the heroisms of his heroic sex. But he is still sent on the most humiliating errands by his mother, and depends upon his father for the last nickel of spending money.

Silly Bill fell in love with Lolo, the Baby-Talk Lady, a vapid if amiable little flirt. To woo her in a manner worthy of himself (and incidentally of her) he stole his father's evening clothes. When his wooings became a nuisance to the neighborhood, his mother stole the clothes back, and had them altered to fit the middle-aged form of her husband, thereby keeping William at home in the evening.

But when it came to the Baby-Talk Lady's good-bye dance, not to be present was unendurable. How William Sylvanus again got the dress suit, and how as he was wearing it at the party the negro servant, Genesis, disclosed the fact that the proud garment was in reality his father's, are some of the elements in this charming comedy of youth.

"Seventeen" is a story of youth, love and summer time. It is a work of exquisite human sympathy and delicious humor. Produced by Stuart Walker at the Booth Theatre, New York, it enjoyed a run of four years in New York and on the road. Strongly recommended for High School production. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) Price, 75 Cents.

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